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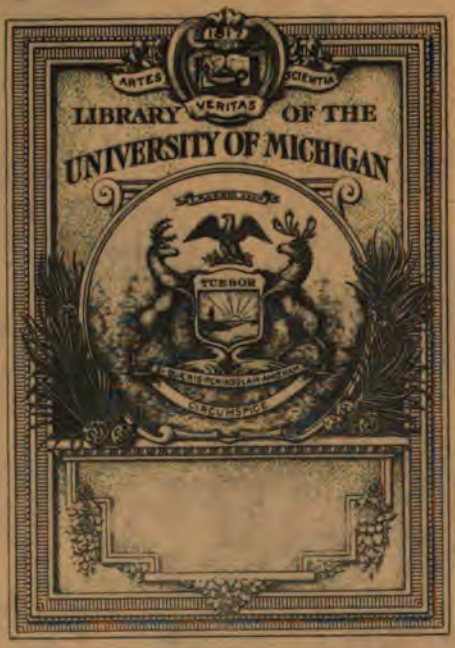

THE GIFT OF
Louis Blanchet

THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTES:

Or, a View of the

EVIDENCES, DOCTRINES, MORALS, AND INSTITUTIONS

OF

CHRISTIANITY.

BY RICHARD WATSON.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH A COPIOUS INDEX, AND AN ANALYSIS

BY J. M'CLINTOCK.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

THIS edition of the INSTITUTES contains the "Analysis" heretofore published as a separate volume. It is also furnished with a pretty copious *Index*, the want of which has long been felt. It is hoped that the work will be found better adapted, both for students and general readers, than ever before.

Had not the work been stereotyped, the undersigned would have gladly revised the body of the book, especially so far as to present the Greek quotations in a more correct and sightly form.

J. M'CLINTOCK.

New-York, May 6, 1850.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE LONDON EDITION.

THE object of this work is to exhibit the EVIDENCES, DOCTRINES, MORALS, and INSTITUTIONS of Christianity, in a form adapted to the use of young Ministers, and Students in Divinity. It is hoped also that it may supply the *desideratum* of a BODY OF DIVINITY, adapted to the present state of theological literature, neither Calvinistic on the one hand, nor Pelagian on the other.

The reader will perceive that the object has been to follow a course of plain and close argument on the various subjects discussed, without any attempt at embellishment of style, and without adding practical uses and reflections, which, however important, did not fall within the plan of this publication. The various controversies on fundamental and important points, have been introduced; but it has been the sincere aim of the Author to discuss every subject with fairness and candour: and honestly, but in the spirit of "THE TRUTH," which he more anxiously wishes to be taught than to teach, to exhibit what he believes to be the sense of the Holy Scriptures, to whose authority, he trusts, he has unreservedly subjected all his own opinions.

London, March 26, 1823.

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PART FIRST.

EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

OUTLINE.

I. PRESUMPTIVE evidence.
- A. That a direct revelation would be made in *some* way. (Pp. 1–62.)
- B. That it would be made in *this* way, i. e., in the *manner* in which Christianity professes to have been revealed. (Pp. 62–70.)

II. DIRECT evidence, preliminary to the introduction of which are considered
- (1.) The kind and degree of evidence necessary to authenticate a revelation. (Pp. 70–95.)
- (2.) The use and limitation of reason in religion; (pp. 95–105;) after which the positive evidences are introduced under the following heads:—viz.

(I.) EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.
- I. *Preliminaries.*
  - (A.) Antiquity of the Scriptures. (Pp. 105–133.)
  - (B.) Uncorrupted preservation of the books of Scripture. (Pp. 134–141.)
  - (C.) Credibility of the testimony of the sacred writers; (pp. 141–146;) which being established, of course proves the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of the books of Scripture.
- II. *Argument.*
  - (A.) From miracles.
    Real miracles were wrought. (Pp. 146–156.)
    Objections to the proof from MIRACLES answered. (Pp. 156–175.)
  - (B.) From prophecy.
    Real predictions were delivered. (Pp. 175–193.)
    Objections to the proof from PROPHECY answered. (Pp. 194–204.)

(II.) INTERNAL EVIDENCE.
- (A.) The excellence and beneficial tendency of the *doctrines* of Scripture. (Pp. 205–225.)
- (B.) *Moral* tendency of the Scriptures. (Pp. 225–230.)
- (C.) *Style* and *manner* of the sacred writers. (Pp. 220, 231, 232.)

(III.) COLLATERAL EVIDENCE. (Pp. 232–236.) And finally

(IV.) Miscellaneous OBJECTIONS are answered. (Pp. 236–262.)

PRESUMPTIVE EVIDENCE.

a. *Presumptive evidence that a direct revelation would be made in* SOME *way.*

I. (Chap. i.) MAN A MORAL AGENT.

a.) Man has always been considered capable of performing *moral actions*. which are—*voluntary* actions, having respect to some *rule*.

b.) *Antecedent* to human laws, there must have been a perception of the difference of moral actions, because many actions would be judged good or evil, were all civil codes abolished.

c.) This perception may be traced, in part, to experience and observation of the injurious tendency of vice, and the beneficial results of virtue;—but

d.) It cannot be so traced *entirely*. There has been, among all men, a constant reference to the *will* of God, or of supposed deities, as a *rule* to determine the good or evil of the conduct of men.

We derive from these considerations two weighty presumptions: supposing the Theist to grant the existence of a Supreme Creator, of infinite power, wisdom, &c.:—

FIRST, (from a, b, and c,) That those actions which men consider *good*, have the *implied* sanction of the will of the Creator.

SECOND, That they were originally, in *some way*, enjoined as his *law*, and their contraries prohibited.

II. (Chap. 2.) THE RULE WHICH DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF MORAL ACTIONS MUST BE PRESUMED TO BE MATTER OF REVELATION FROM GOD.

a.) Creation implies *government*—and government implies *law*—which must be *revealed*:—and a revelation of divine will may be made either, (1.) By significant actions, or (2.) By direct communication in *language*. The *Theist* admits that (1) has been done. The Christian admits (1) and (2) both: declaring (1) to be insufficient, and the question is, On which side is the *presumption* of truth?

b.) We assert that natural indications are insufficient for the formation of a virtuous character, and illustrate the deficiency by reference to temperance—justice—benevolence—worship—prayer—a future state, and the pardon of sin.

III (Chaps. 3, 4, 5.) A is proved BY THE WEAKNESS OF HUMAN REASON AND THE WANT OF AUTHORITY IN HUMAN OPINIONS. (Pp. 15–44.)

a.) Granting that a perfect reason could determine the moral quality of actions,—Yet (1.) That perfect reason is not to be found; (2.) Men differ greatly in their reasoning powers; (3.) Men are not sufficiently contemplative, nor sufficiently honest, for such inquiries; (4.) We find that men bring down the *rule* to the *practice*, rather than raise the *practice* to the *rule*.

b.) But supposing truth discovered, and intellectual men appointed to teach others, what authority have they?

1. We answer *a priori*, no other authority than the *opinion* of a teacher, which might be received or not.
2. And *facts* are sufficiently in proof of this.—Cicero, &c.

c.) (Chap. 4.) But reason, alone, cannot determine the moral quality of actions. (1.) Reason is an erring faculty, and its exercise is limited by our *knowledge*. (2.) It is *one* thing to assent to a doctrine when discovered and proposed, and *another* to make such discovery originally. (3.) The principles of (what is called) *natural religion* command the assent of reason, but the question is, *Whence came they?* (4.) Certainly they were never mentioned as discoveries, either by the sacred writers, or sages of antiquity.

d.) In fact, sober views of great religious truths have been found *nowhere*, since patriarchal times, save in the sacred writings:—thus,

(1.) Existence of GOD. Ancient doubts. Modern Budhists.

(2.) Creation of *matter*. Eternity of matter was the doctrine of the Ionic, Platonic, Italic, and Stoic schools. Aristotle.

(3.) *Individuality* of the human soul.

(4.) Doctrine of *Providence*. Ancients believed in conflicting and subordinate gods.

(5.) *Immortality* of the human soul. Ancient doctrine of *absorption*. Modern Hindoo notion of *annihilation*.

e.) (Chap. 5.*) Those truths which are found in the writings and religious systems of the heathen can be traced to revelation.

(1.) There was a substratum of common opinions among all early nations, in regard to facts and doctrines which are contained in the Old Testament:—thus, golden age, sacrifice, formation of the world, &c. (P. 27.)

(2.) (Pp. 27, 28, &c.) *Adam*, a moral agent, must have had instruction from the Creator, and his knowledge might easily have been transmitted to *Noah's* time, for Methuselah was contemporary with both Adam and Noah. Then *after* the flood, the system would of course be propagated by Noah's descendants, and we find it received in the family of *Abraham*. Subsequently it was doubtless vastly diffused by the dispersions and restorations of the children of Israel. Nine conclusions. (P. 33.)

IV. A is proved by the NECESSITY OF REVELATION,—evinced,

a.) By the *state of religious knowledge* among the heathen, (chap. VI.) with regard to the *first* principles of religion: viz.

1 *God*. The notion of subordinate deities obtained equally with that of one supreme God. The eternity of matter and its perversity, not to be controlled even by God, were favourite opinions.

2. *Providence*. If admitted at all, the doctrine was vitiated and counteracted by other opinions. The Epicureans denied it; Plato

* The notes to this chapter are very valuable, and should be studied carefully, in connexion with the text.

joined *fortune* with God; and Polytheism gave up the world to opposing and conflicting powers.

3. *Future state.* Oriental doctrines of *transmigration* and *absorption*. Periodical destruction and renovation. Aristotle, Democritus, Heraclitus, and Epicurus either *denied* or refused to countenance the doctrine of the soul's existence after death. Cicero doubted; Pliny and Cesar denied it; Seneca wavered.

b.) By the *state of morals* among the heathen. (Chap. vii.)

1. Their moral and religious systems were doubtless from a common source.

2. But the *rules* had become involved in obscurity, their injunctions lacked *authority*, and the general *practices* of men had become vicious. The subject is illustrated by adverting to certain precepts of the second table, and showing that, although heathen nations have been sensible of the obligation of these, among all of them the *rule* has been perverted in theory and violated in practice.

(1.) *Murder* and *suicide.* Disregard of life among heathen. Gladiatorial combats. Treatment of slaves and children.

(2.) *Hatred* and *revenge.* Cicero. Aristotle.

(3.) *Adultery, divorce, fornication,* &c. Laws in regard to these, though acknowledged, yet grossly violated among heathen nations, even down to crimes *παρα φυσιν.*

(4.) *Theft* and *rapine.* Honesty almost unknown among heathen

(5.) *Lying.* Menander. Plato. India.

c.) By the fact, that *their religions themselves were destructive of morality* (Chap. viii.)

1. Their gloomy superstitions fostered *ferocity* and *cruelty.* Human sacrifices among ancients, and also in modern Africa, Asia, and America.

2. Their religions were as productive of *impurity* as of bloodshed Roman *Floralia.* Mysteries. Indian temple worship.

B. *Presumptive evidence that a direct revelation would be made in* THIS WAY i. e., *in the manner in which Christianity* professes to have been revealed. (Pp. 62–70.)

a.) *A supernatural manifestation of truth should,*

1 Contain explicit information on those subjects which are most important to man;

2. Accord with the principles of former revelations:

3. Have a satisfactory external authentication;

4. Contain provisions for its effectual promulgation;

a.) *All these conditions are fulfilled in the Scriptures.*

1 They give information as to GOD, MAN, a MEDIATOR, PROVIDENCE FUTURE STATE, &c.

2. *Three* distinct religious systems, the *Patriarchal, Mosaic,* and *Christian,* harmonize in their doctrines and objects.

3. The Mosaic and Christian revelations profess to rest on external evidence.
4. Provision made (1.) By writing. (2.) By commemorative rites, &c. (3.) By accredited teachers.

II. DIRECT EVIDENCE.

Two preliminaries.

(1) (Chap. ix.) *The evidences necessary to authenticate a revelation.* (P. 70.)

1 EXTERNAL, principal and most appropriate: if not to the immediate recipient, at least to those to whom he communicates it. There are two branches of the external proof, *Miracles* and *Prophecy.*

(a.) MIRACLES.

1. *Definition.* 1.) Popular. 2.) Philosophic. 3.) Theological.
2. *Possibility* of miracles. (Pp. 74, 75.)
3. Distinction between *real* miracles and *prodigies.* Criteria. (P. 76.)
4. Necessity of connexion between even such *real miracles*, the *messenger*, and his *message.* (P. 78.)
5. *Human testimony sufficient to establish the credibility of miracles.* (Pp. 78, 79.)
   (1.) Hume's objection.
   (2.) Replies to it by *Paley—Llandaff—Campbell.*
6. *Fitness* of the evidence of miracles as a ground of universal belief. (P. 85.)

(b.) PROPHECY.

1. *Possibility* not to be denied. Dilemma.
2. *Adequateness* as a proof.

2. INTERNAL.

(a.) Nature of the evidence.

(b.) Its rank in the scale of evidence.

1. Not *necessary:* sufficient proof *without* it: but nevertheless useful.
2. Not *primary*, but confirmatory. The contrary opinion not only supposes us capable of judging *fully* of the doctrines revealed, but also renders the external testimony comparatively nugatory. Two sources of this error.
   (1.) The notion that miracles might be wrought to attest unworthy doctrines.
   (2.) A confounding of the *rational* with the *authenticating* evidence.
3. Not *so well adapted* to the mass of mankind as external evidence.

3. COLLATERAL. Nature of the evidence stated. (P. 94.)

(II.) (Chap. xi.) *The use and limitation of reason in religion.*

(a.) USE of reason in regard to revelation.

1. To *investigate* the evidences of its divine authority.
2. To *interpret* the meaning of the record.

(b.) LIMITATION.

1. It must not decide in cases where the nature of things is not known, either *by* or *without* revelation.
2. The things compared must be of the *same nature*, and the comparison must be made in the *same respects*.

These preliminaries being settled, we now proceed to adduce positive evidences, of which there are three heads, viz.:—

I. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

(I.) Preliminaries.

(A.) (Chap. xii.) ANTIQUITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

a.) (P. 107.) The PERSONS *who were the immediate instruments of these revelations, existed at the periods assigned.* Proved,

(1.) By the very existence of 1.) The Jewish polity; and 2.) The Christian religion.

(2.) By the testimony of ancient authors.

1. As to *Moses.* Manetho, Apollonius, Strabo, Justin, Pliny, Tacitus, Juvenal, Longinus, Diod. Siculus, &c.
2. As to *Christ.* Suetonius, Tacitus.

b.) (P. 109.) The BOOKS *which contain the doctrines are of the date assigned to them.* Proved,

(1.) *As to Old Testament.*

1. By the language in which it is written.
2. By Josephus' Catalogue.
3. By the Septuagint, and by Samaritan Pentateuch.
4. By LESLIE'S ARGUMENT, which gives four rules for determining the truth of matters of fact, all which are applied with success to the Old Testament, viz.:

(1.) The matter of fact must be cognizable by the senses.
(2.) The matter of fact must be publicly done.
(3.) The matter of fact must be commemorated by monuments and outward actions,
(4.) Which must date from the time of the matters of fact.

(2.) *As to New Testament.*

1. By Leslie's Argument, as before.
2. By internal evidence from the narration itself.
3. Testimony of adversaries. CELSUS, PORPHYRY, HIEROCLES, JULIAN.
4. Quotations by subsequent authors, from the apostles downward (P. 126.)

(B.) (Chap. xiii.) UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION OF THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE. (P. 134.)

a.) *The books are* SUBSTANTIALLY *the same as when written.* Proved,

(1.) As to *Old Testament.* By the list of Josephus, Septuagint, and Samaritan Pentateuch.

(2.) As to *New Testament.* By the Catalogues of Origen, Athanasius, Cyril, &c., from A. D. 230, downward.

b.) *But it can be shown also, that they have descended to us without any material alteration whatever.*

(1.) *As to Old Testament.*

1 *Before the time of Christ,* they were secured from alteration by their being generally known,—by the jealousy of the Samaritans,—by the public reading on Sabbath,—by Chaldee Paraphrase, and the Greek version.

2. *After the birth of Christ,* by mutual jealousy of Jews and Christians, and the general diffusion of the books.

3. All this is confirmed by the *agreement of the manuscripts* in all important respects. (P. 138.)

(2.) *As to New Testament.*

1. From their *contents.* Same facts and doctrines.

2. *Impossibility of corruption* because of general knowledge of the books, and mutual restraints of orthodox and heretics, Eastern and Western churches.

3. From *the agreement of the manuscripts.*

4. From *the agreement of ancient versions and quotations.*

(C.) (Chap. xiv.) CREDIBILITY OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE SACRED WRITERS.

(1.) That they were persons of *virtuous and sober character* was never denied.

(2.) They were in *circumstances to know the truth* of what they relate. They could not be deceived, for instance, as to the feeding of the four thousand, gift of tongues, &c.

(3.) They had *no interest* in making good the story. Their interests all lay in the opposite direction.

(4.) Their account is *circumstantial,* and given in a learned age, when its falsity might easily have been detected.

(II.) After these preliminaries, establishing the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of the books, it remains now to present the argument.

(A.) FROM MIRACLES. (P. 146.)

(1.) (Chap. xv.) *Their reality proved.*

(a.) Definition of a *true* miracle.

(b.) *Claims* of Scriptural miracles to be considered *true,* illustrated—

1. As to those of *Moses.* Darkness, destruction of first-born, passage of Red Sea, falling of manna.

2. As to those of *Christ.* Illustrated especially by the greatest miracle, the RESURRECTION, in regard to which it is shown,

a. That *Christ was really dead.*

b. That *the body was missing*. That

c. Every *attempt to account* for (b,) except on the supposition of a resurrection, is *absurd*, and

d. That the story was *confirmed by the subsequent* testimony and conduct of the disciples.

(2.) (Chap. xvi.) *Objections answered.*

(a.) It is asserted that *miracles have been wrought in support of other doctrines.*

I. On the *authority of Scripture.* For, it is said,

(1.) That Scripture gives *instances* of such: e. g., of *magicians* in opposition to Moses, and the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor, etc. In reply to this,

1. *As to the feats of the magicians*, it is to be noticed, 1. That they were professed wonder-workers; 2. That they could imitate but three of Moses' miracles; 3. That their works were wrought to maintain the *equality* of their idols with *Jehovah*. Two explanations are given.

1. Some suppose these were exercises of legerdemain.

2. Our author admits a supernatural evil agency: which is not unreasonable, inasmuch as the design was, not to disprove the divinity of Jehovah, but to maintain their own authority.

2. As to *the witch of Endor*, and Satan's bearing our Lord through the air:—Granting these events to have been miraculous, it cannot be shown that they were wrought in opposition to a divine mission.

(2.) That Scripture *assumes the possibility of such.* Deut. xiii, 1 Matt. xxiv, 24; 2 Thess. ii, 8, 9. As to this,

1. Notice the *nature* and *work* of Satan.—Six points.

2. Observe the *limitations of the power* of evil spirits, four points: (1.) No work of creation. (2.) No power of life and death. (3.) No knowledge of future events. (4.) No *certain* knowledge of the *thoughts* of men.

3. Apply these considerations to show

(1.) That no *real* miracle can be performed in opposition to the truth. Illustrated,

(1.) By the case of the Egyptian magi.

(2.) By that of false Christs, &c.

(2.) Nor any *prophecy* be uttered implying certain knowledge of future events: though great *sagacity* may be exhibited.

N. B. No evidence recorded in favour of falsehood that might not readily be refuted on the spot by counter evidence.

II. On the *authority of profane writers.* (P. 168.) Miracles of Aristeas, Pythagoras, Alexander, Vespasian, Apollonius Tyaneus, and the Romish Church. To this we reply,

(a.) These pretended miracles are all *deficient in evidence.*

(b.) They are *insulated* and destitute of any reasonable object. while the miracles of Scripture combine for the establishment of one system.

(B.) FROM PROPHECY. (P. 175.)

(1.) (Chap. xvii.) *Their reality proved.*

(a.) Preliminary considerations.

1. The instances are *numerous.*
2. Many have *clearly come to pass.*
3. They all *tend to one great end.*
4. This last characteristic is *peculiar to the Scripture prophecies.*
5. There is no *obscurity* in them that can be a just ground for cavil.
6. The *double sense* of prophecy, so far from being an objection, is a confirmation of the infinite wisdom that inspired it.

(b.) Examples of such predictions. (P. 181, et seq.)

1. The prediction to *Adam of the protracted conflict between the serpent and the seed of the woman*, with the ultimate triumph of the latter.
2. Jacob's prediction respecting the *time when Shiloh* should come.
3. Predictions respecting *the Jewish nation*, viz.:—(1.) Their apostacies. (2.) Their punishments. (3.) Their restoration.
4. Predictions *respecting the Messiah.*
   (1.) Upward of *one hundred* distinct predictions as to his birth, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection.
   (2.) Wonderful prophecy, especially, contained in Isaiah liii.

(2.) (Chap. xviii.) *Objections answered.*

(a.) It is objected to some of the prophecies, *that they were written after the event.*

This cannot be sustained: illustrated as to *Isaiah* and *Daniel.*

(b.) The *Scripture prophecies are compared to the heathen oracles.*

Let us take the *Delphic* oracle for an example. Of this we say,

1. None of its predictions ever *went deep into futurity.*
2. *Its responses were ambiguous.*
3. Venal and servile, *it was easily corrupted.* None of which can be alleged of Scripture prophecies.

(c.) The *character of the prophets is aspersed.*

E. g., Balaam, and Jewish false prophets. Singular proceeding to condemn the *true* on account of the *false*, who were not received by the Jews themselves.

(d.) *It is asserted that some of the prophecies have failed.*

1. Promise to Abraham. Ans. But this was fulfilled in the time of David and Solomon.
2. Promise of great wealth and dominion to the Jews. (*Voltaire.*) Ans. *Civil* blessings promised conditionally, and *spiritual* blessings generally predicted under figures of speech.

3. Prediction of Isaiah to Ahaz. Ans. This *was* fulfilled.
4. Prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah. Ans. This was fulfilled in all particulars, as far as we know.
5. That of Ezekiel respecting the desolation of Egypt. Ans. We know not that it has *not* been fulfilled: and the very same prophecy contains a prediction that has been remarkably accomplished. (P. 202.)

(e.) *Sundry actions of the prophets have been ridiculed.* Ans. They were appropriate to the occasions, and in accordance with primitive and oriental usage.

II. INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

Notice two preliminaries.

(1.) The distinction between *rational* and *authenticating* evidence.

(2.) Those doctrines which have no *rational* evidence do not suffer in authority *on that account.*

We have now to consider,

A.) THE EXCELLENCE AND BENEFICIAL TENDENCY OF THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE. (P. 204.) Among which are

a.) The *existence of God*—his *character*, *attributes*, &c.

b.) The *moral condition of man:* viz.

1. The race is absolutely *vicious.*
2. And vicious in consequence of a *moral taint* in their nature: for the evil is not to be accounted for by the influence of *education* or *example*, as some vainly say.
3. The *divine government*, in regard to man, is of a *mixed character.*

c.) The *atonement.* Doctrine much objected to, as being deficient in rational evidence. The Christian doctrine of atonement is grounded on

1. Future punishment, which is
2. Unlimited: for which two arguments may be assigned. (1.) Present analogies. (2.) Doctrine of immortality.
3. The *problem* of the possibility of pardon, without such a relaxation of the divine government as would effectually nullify it, can only be solved by this great doctrine. Repentance and reformation are not only unavailing, but would, from the nature of the case, be impracticable. Illustration, *Zaleucus.*

d.) Doctrine of the *influence of the Holy Spirit.*

1. No *physical* objection to this doctrine.
2. No *moral* objection. Free agency *not* destroyed.
3. It is adapted to the *moral destitution* of man.
4. It presents an *affecting view of the divine character.*
5. It elevates our *aspirations*, and encourages us to the performance of the most difficult duties.

This branch of the internal evidence may be properly closed by noticing

e.) The wonderful *agreement* in *doctrine* among the writers, though numerous, and writing at different periods.

(B.) MORAL TENDENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES. (Pp. 225–30.)

a.) It has been asserted that the *Bible has an immoral tendency*, because it records the failings of some of its leading characters! Answered:—These frailties are always recorded for admonition; illustrated by David's case.

N. B. The moral characters of Blount, Tyndal, Hobbes, Voltaire, &c., not very honourable to the cause which they espouse.

b.) *Compare pagan morality with that of the Scriptures.*

1. Great moral qualities attributed to the divine Being were *abstract* with them; but in *Christ* they are all exemplified.
2. No *authority for moral rules* among Pagans.
3. Their *apprehension* of moral principles was *indistinct.*
4. The *same writers* among heathen are of a lower grade than among Christians. (P. 229.)
5. Beauty and symmetry of the Christian morals. Wesley. Taylor.

(C.) STYLE AND MANNER OF THE SACRED WRITERS (P. 230.)

a.) *Style*, various, as it should be, being the productions of different individuals, in different ages. Marsh. Michaelis.

b.) *Manner*, artless and natural, possessing all the simplicity of truth.

III. COLLATERAL EVIDENCE.

(A.) MARVELLOUS DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIANITY, especially during the first three centuries, confirmed by Tacitus, Pliny, Justin, Tertullian, Origen, until A. D. 300, when *Christianity became the established religion of the Roman empire.* (P. 232.)

(B.) ACTUAL EFFECT PRODUCED UPON MANKIND. Idolatry. Immorality Infanticide. Condition of woman.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Preliminary remarks. (Chap. XX.) (P. 236.)

1. Objections are often raised in great *ignorance* of the volume itself.
2. Hasty theories have been constructed, which have been found or thought to contradict the Scriptures; thus Deism arose in the sixteenth century in France, and in the seventeenth in England.
3. HERBERT, HOBBES, SHAFTESBURY, and HUME. the chief English infidels; and the great principle of error with them all, is that of Herbert of Cherbury, viz., "*the sufficiency of our natural faculties to form a religion for ourselves, and to decide upon the merits of revealed truth.*"

I. Objections on *moral* grounds.

1. *The command to the Israelites* to exterminate the Canaanites.

Ans. It cannot be proved inconsistent with the character of God to employ *human agents*, as well as natural, in such a work.

2. *Law in Deuteronomy* authorizing parents to accuse their children, &c.
   Ans. In fact this was a merciful regulation.
3. *Intentional offering of Isaac by Abraham.*
   Ans. (1.) Abraham had no doubt of the divine command.
   (2.) He obeyed, in faith that God would raise his son.
4. *Indelicacy and immodesty* have been charged upon the Scriptures.
   Ans. (1.) These sins are everywhere denounced as offensive to God.
   (2.) The passages alluded to are *generally* prohibitions of crime.
   (3.) The simplicity of early manners is to be considered.

Several others might be adduced, but a little skill in the languages and antiquities of Scripture will always clear up the main difficulties.

II. Objections on *philosophical* grounds. (P. 241.)

1. Infidels are fond of contrasting (what they call) the *simplicity* of the book of nature with the *mystery* of the book of God.
   Ans. (1.) Many doctrines and duties *are* comprehensible.
   (2.) Facts may be *revealed*, and yet be incomprehensible: e. g., it is revealed *that God is omnipresent*, but not *how* he is so, &c.
   (3.) But even in their boasted *natural philosophy*, *revelation and mystery* go hand in hand. The real causes of the phenomena named gravitation, cohesion, evaporation, &c., are unknown; and even in *pure mathematics*, such incomprehensibles occur.
2. From the minuteness of the earth as contrasted with *the vastness of the material universe*, infidelity argues the insignificance of man; thence the improbability of redemption.
   Answered, (1.) By Dr. Beatty. (2.) By Granville Penn.
3. Objections are brought against the *Mosaic chronology* from two sources:
   (1.) The chronology of ancient nations.
   (2.) The structure of the earth.
   As to the (1) class, these ancient chronologies are rapidly losing character, especially the Hindoo and Chinese, which make the greatest pretensions to antiquity. No reliance whatever is placed upon them.
   As to the (2) *geological* objection, two solutions have been offered.
   1. That the *days* of the Mosaic history are indefinite periods.
   2. That an indefinite time elapsed between the *beginning* spoken of in Genesis i, 1, and the work of the six days.

To both these solutions our author objects, and prefers the views of Mr. Granville Penn.

4. It is objected that *light was created* on the *first* day, and the sun not until the *fourth*.
   Several solutions.
5. Objections to Mosaic account of the deluge.
6. Objections as to number of animals taken into the ark with Noah

PART SECOND.

DOCTRINES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

OUTLINE

I. DOCTRINES RELATING TO GOD.

(A.) Existence: (Ch. i.)
(B.) Attributes: (Ch. ii–vii.)
(C.) Persons:
(I.) *Doctrine of Trinity*, (Ch. viii, ix.)
(II.) *Divinity of Christ*, (Ch. x–xv.)
(III.) *Humanity of Christ*, (Ch. xvi.)
(IV.) *Personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost*, (Ch. xvii.)

II. DOCTRINES RELATING TO MAN.

(A.) Original sin: (Ch. xviii.)
(B.) Redemption:
(I.) *Principles of*, (Ch. xix–xxii.)
(II.) *Benefits of*, (Ch. xxiii–xxix.)

I. DOCTRINES RELATING TO GOD.—(Ch. i–xvii.)

(A.)—EXISTENCE OF GOD. (Ch. i.)

(I.) Source of the idea.

I. *From the sacred writings.*

1. From the *names* of God as recorded in Scripture:
2. From the *actions* which the Scriptures ascribe to him:
3. From the *attributes* with which they invest him.

II. *From the sacred writings alone.* (P. 267.)

1. The language of the Christian philosophers, in regard to the Deity, is very different from the inconsistent and groveling views of the sages of antiquity: e. g., *Barrow*, *Pearson*, *Lawson*, and *Newton*, are quoted.
2. The question of man's ability to discover the existence of a first cause, cannot be determined by matter of fact.

3. Nor can the abstract probability of such discovery be sustained. (P. 271.)
   (1.) Uneducated man is a creature of appetite:—but he cannot be educated without civilization and society:—these *have* never existed, and we may safely say, can never exist, without a religious basis: but by the hypothesis, that basis, viz., the idea of God, is wanting.
   (2.) (P. 278.) Clear as the argument *a posteriori* now appears to us, yet all history shows that the *eternity of matter* has been an impassable barrier in the way of human reasoning, unaided by *revelation*, in the attempt to establish a divine existence.
   (3.) (P. 274.) The doctrine of *innate ideas* is exploded.

II.) Proofs. (Pp. 272–325.)

I. Preliminary observations.

(a.) *On the relation of cause and effect.*

1. The principle is, that *nothing exists or comes to pass without an* EFFICIENT CAUSE.
2. Hume (probably following Hobbes) objects to this principle on the ground, that what we suppose to be *necessary connexions*, in nature, are or may be only *habitual sequences*, and that we cannot demonstrate them to be otherwise.
3. Answered by *Dugald Stewart*, who admits Hume's doctrine indeed, but nullifies its evil results, by his distinction between *efficient* and *physical* causes. But
4. (P. 279.) Our author supposes the true state of the case to be
   (1.) That there are *efficient* causes, and that the relation between them and their effects is *necessary*.
   (2.) That there are *physical* causes, the relation between which and their effects is *necessary* in this sense, viz., that GOD has established a certain order in nature, by which his own efficiency exerts itself. This is a very different notion from the unsatisfactory one of *habitual sequence*.

(b.) On the distinction between argument *a priori* and *a posteriori*. Superiority of the latter in this case.

II. Proof of the *existence* of God.

1. *Locke's* argument. "I exist: I did not always exist: whatever begins to exist must have a cause: that cause must be adequate: this *adequate* cause is unlimited: it must be God."
2. *Howe's* argument. The same, but more expanded, thus:
   (1) Somewhat hath existed from *eternity:* hence (2) must be uncaused: hence (3) independent: hence (4) necessary: hence (5) self-active and hence (6) *originally vital*, and the *source of all life.*

III. Proof of the *intelligence* of God. (P. 286.)

1. Dr. *Sam. Clarke's* argument from the *intelligence of man*, and the

variety, *order*, *excellence*, and *contrivance* of things: and especially from the existence of *motion*.

2. (P. 291.) This last (viz., motion) expanded, from *Howe's Living Temple*.

3. The basis of NATURAL THEOLOGY, as found in Howe's Living Temple, —"Whatever exists, with the *marks of wisdom and design* upon it, had a *wise and designing* CAUSE." (P. 293.) Illustrations,

(1.) A *watch* presented to an observer for the first time.

(2.) Much more, *the heavenly bodies* exhibit wisdom and contrivance.

(3.) The *human frame* especially.

1. The *double* members and their uses.
2. The *eye*, with its curious optical mechanism.
3. The *spine:* and, besides the frame of the body,

(4.) Its *animal functions*, and those of terrestrial creatures, viz.: (Pp. 304–306:)

1. Growth.
2. Nutrition.
3. Spontaneous motion.
4. Sensation.

(5.) *Intellectual powers of man.* (P. 306.)

4. The instances of the *watch*, the *eye*, the *double organs*, and the *spine* largely illustrated by quotations from Paley's Natural Theology. (Pp. 307–322.)

IV. Proof of the *personality of God.* (P. 322–325.)

III.) Remarks.

I. *Absurdity of Atheism.*

1. As to the eternity of the world.
2. As to the eternity of *unorganized matter.*
3. Some *modern schemes of Atheism*, viz.:

(1.) Buffon's *organic molecules.*

(2.) The system of *appetencies.* No other answer necessary than that these schemes are entirely wanting in *evidence.*

II. *Character of the argument a priori.* (Pp. 330–335.)

1. It is unsatisfactory, and tends to lead men away from the *sure* argument, pointed out by Scripture, from "*the things which do appear.*"
2. The existence itself of a supreme Being can hardly be shown by this method. Indeed, even Dr. S. Clarke first proves the existence of "one unchangeable and independent Being," *a posteriori.*
3. Some objections to Dr. S. Clarke's view of the *necessary* existence of the supreme Being.

The being of God is *necessary*, because it is underived; not *underived* because it is necessary.

(B.)—ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. (Ch. ii–vii.)

I. UNITY. (Ch. ii.)

(I.) *Scriptural testimony.* Deut. vi, 4; iv, 35, &c.

1. The Scriptural notion is, that GOD is a *pure simple being*: *so one*, that there *are* no other gods: *so one*, that there *can be* no other gods.
2. If we admit the Scriptures, we admit a Deity: if we admit one God, we exclude all others.

(II.) *Evidence from reason.*

1. *A priori* argument is here unobjectionable, if logical.
   (1.) Dr. Clarke's shown to be useless.
   (2.) *Wollaston's*, *Wilkins'*, and *Pearson's* arguments stated.
   (3.) The best argument of the kind is that from the idea of *absolute perfection.*
2. Proofs may be derived also from the *works* of God.
   (1.) In the *harmony* of the universe we discern but one *Will* and one *Intelligence*, and therefore but One Being.
   (2.) *Uniformity of plan* in the universe, is a proof of the unity of God. Illustrations by Paley. (Pp. 340–342.)

(III.) *Importance of this doctrine.*

The unity of God the basis of all true religion.

II. SPIRITUALITY. (Ch. ii.)

(I.) *Scriptural testimony:* "GOD is a SPIRIT." Similar passages abound. The immateriality of the divine Being is important, because of its connexion with the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul.

(II.) *Evidence from reason*, both as to the *spiritual* nature of GOD, and the *unthinking* nature of matter.

1 GOD is intelligent, therefore GOD is a spiritual Being, because intelligence is not a property of matter. For
   (1.) *Unorganized* matter is certainly unintelligent, hence intelligence cannot be an *essential* property of matter; but *it is* an essential attribute of Deity, hence the Deity cannot be material.
   (2.) Nor is *intelligence the result of material organization*, for
      1. *Vegetables* are unintelligent.
      2. Were intellect *constantly* conjoined with animal organization, we could deny the *necessity* of such connexion, but we deny this supposed constant connexion, and thus take away the basis of Priestley's argument. This denial is based upon the following:
         a.) The organization of the human frame is often perfect *after death.* But dead men do not think.
         b.) The organism of Adam's body was complete before he became a "living soul."

(3.) But we may be told, that the subject supposed in the argument is a *living* organized being. This introduces a new element, viz., *life*, into the argument; but

1. *Vegetables* live, and yet do not think.
2. The *organic* life of Bichat is common to animals and vegetables.
3. The *animal* life is defined by Bichat, Lawrence, and even by Cuvier, to be the "sum total of its functions of a certain class." Absurdity of this shown by quotations from Rennell and Barclay.

(4.) Further proofs that matter is incapable of thought, drawn from its essential properties of *extension*, *impenetrability*, *divisibility*, &c., none of which belong to thought.

(5.) The notions, *matter* and *mind*, are merely relative. Reid. Stewart Immateriality of brutes not denied.

III. ETERNITY. (Ch. iii.)

1. Scriptural notion, God had no beginning and shall have no end: "From everlasting to everlasting," &c.
2. These representations evidently convey something more than the mere idea of *infinite duration*. Life is *essential* to GOD: he lives by virtue of his own nature, which can be said of him alone.
3. Some obscure notions of the eternity prevailed among the heathens, probably derived from the Jewish Scriptures.
4. Doctrine of the *Eternal Now* repudiated.
   (1.) Duration, as applied to GOD, is an extension of the same idea, as applied to ourselves.
   (2.) The objection to this, (viz., that it would argue imperfection,) arises from the confounding *succession in the duration* with *change in the substance*.
   (3.) If it be said that *succession* is only an artificial method of conceiving or measuring duration, it may be answered, that leagues measure the ocean, but leagues are not the ocean, though both leagues and the ocean may actually exist.

IV. OMNIPOTENCE. (Ch. iii.)

(I.) *Scriptural testimony.*

1. Reasons why this attribute is so much dwelt upon by the sacred writers viz., to secure the *obedience*, *worship*, and *confidence* of man.
2. Mode of its exhibition in the Scriptures.
   (a.) By the fact of *creation*.
   (b.) By the *vastness* and *variety* of the works of God.
   (c.) By the *ease* with which he is said to create and uphold all things.
   (d.) By the *terrible* descriptions given of the divine power.
   (e.) By the subjection of all *intelligent* beings to his will.
3. The power of all these descriptions lies in their *truth*.

4. The works of God *manifestations*, but not the *measure*, of his omnipotence.

(II.) Only *limitation* to the divine power: no working of contradictions, or impossibilities.

V. OMNIPRESENCE. (Ch. iii.)

1. Scriptural testimony.
2. Heathen notions of omnipresence: some striking, but all defective.
3. Similar errors pervade the infidel philosophy of modern times.
4. The Scriptural phrases in which this doctrine is conveyed, must be taken in their common-sense acceptation.
5. Illustrations of this doctrine from the material world, quoted from Amory and Paley.
6. The *a priori* argument stated.
7. The manner in which God is everywhere present, incomprehensible.

VI. OMNISCIENCE. (Ch. iv.)

(I.) *Scriptural* statement of the doctrine.

1. Direct texts: "Great is the Lord, his *understanding* is INFINITE," &c.
2. Argument in Psalm xciv, from the communication of knowledge to men, illustrated by a quotation from Tillotson.
3. The sacred writers refer to the *works* of God for confirmation.

(II.) The *Pagans* had many fine sentiments in regard to the divine omniscience, but the *moral* of the doctrine was wanting.

(III.) The doctrine of *foreknowledge* examined. Unquestionably it is a Scriptural doctrine; but from its difficulty, &c., three theories have arisen:—

(1.) Theory of Chevalier Ramsay. "It is a matter of choice in God, to think of finite ideas." Answer to this theory,

1. God's *omnipotence* is an infinite *capacity*, but *omniscience* actually comprehends all things that are or can be.
2. Choice implies a *reason*, and that implies *knowledge* of the things rejected.
3. Some *contingent* actions have been foreknown by God, and indeed foretold by his prophets.

(2.) Theory,—"That prescience of contingent events implies a contradiction, hence the absence of such prescience is no dishonour to God." Answer,

(a.) This theory is defective so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain prophecies of rewardable and punishable actions, such as

1. The long course of events connected with the destruction of Babylon.
2. The contingencies involved in the destruction of Jerusalem.

(b.) The principle, that "*certain* prescience destroys *contingency*," cannot be sustained. 1.) The *manner* of the divine prescience is indeed incomprehensible, but the *fact* is undeniably asserted in Scripture; but 2.) The principle itself is founded upon a sophism, which lies in supposing that *contingency* and *certainty* are opposed to each other: while in fact they are not; but *contingency* and *necessity*. It is *knowledge*, and not influence. Opinions of Dr. *Sam. Clarke*, Dr. *Copleston*, and *Curcellæus*.

(3.) Theory,—"That the foreknowledge of God must be supposed to differ so much from anything of the kind in ourselves, that no argument respecting it can be grounded on our imperfect notions."—maintained by Archbishop King and Dr. Copleston. Objections to this theory are,

(a.) The difficulty is *shifted*, not taken away.

(b.) These notions are dangerous:—for if, in the language of Archbishop King, "we can have no *proper notion* of the faculties we ascribe to the divine Being," we have no proper revelation of the divine character at all. But, to examine more minutely, we say that this theory *introduces* difficulties, instead of removing them; and

1. It *assumes* that our notions of God are framed from the results of our *observation* of his works, &c., which is not the case;—they are derived from express revelation.
2. We may form a *true* notion, though not an *adequate* one, of the divine perfections. To be *incomprehensible* is not to be *unintelligible*.
3. This theory *assumes* that the nature of God is *essentially* different from the spiritual nature of man, which is not the doctrine of Scripture.
4. Wherever the language of Scripture is metaphorical, it is distinctly so;—so that the argument drawn from the ascription of *bodily* functions, (p. 390,) and even of human *passions*, (p. 392,) to the divine Being, fails when applied to intellectual and moral powers.

(c.) We say then, lastly, (p. 396,) that there is no incongruity between divine prescience and human freedom, unless *influence* be superadded to necessitate the human will. Quotation from Edwards.

VII. IMMUTABILITY. (Ch. v.)

(I.) *Scriptural statement.* "Of old thou hast laid," &c. "I am the Lord, I change not." With parallel passages.

(II.) Confirmations from *observation*.

1. The stability of the general order of nature.
2. The moral government of God, and

(III.) This immutability is not temporary, but a sovereign, essential per-

fection of the Deity, as we learn from Scripture. He changes not, because he is "*the Lord.*"

(IV.) The divine immutability is not contradicted, but confirmed, by the variety of his *operations*, *regards*, and *affections*, toward the same creatures under different circumstances.

(V.) Cautions are necessary against certain speculations on the divine immutability—such as, that there are no *emotions* and no *succession of ideas* with God,—or, according to Ridgely, that "God's knowledge is independent of the object known."

1. In these, the distinction between things *possible* and things *actual* is overlooked.
2. And also the distinction between *God's* knowledge of all possible things, and of those things to which he determined, before the creation, to give actual existence.

(VI.) The *liberty* of God is closely allied to his immutability, and a proper idea of this will correct the false notions above alluded to.

VIII. WISDOM. (Ch. v.)

(I.) The *Scriptures* testify abundantly to the nice application of God's knowledge to secure his own ends.

(II.) A few of the *characters* of the divine wisdom, as thus exhibited.

1. It acts for *worthy* ends.
2. Its means are *simple:* great effects from few elements.
3. Variety of *equally perfect* operation: e. g. (1.) Variety of *form.* (2.) Variety of *magnitude.*
4. The *connexion and dependence* of the works of God.
5. The means by which offending men are reconciled to God,—the most eminent manifestations of the wisdom of God.

IX. GOODNESS. (Ch. vi.)

(I.) *Scriptural testimony.*

1. It is *goodness* of nature, an essential perfection of the divine character.
2. It is *efficient* and *inexhaustible*:—it "endureth forever."
3. The divine Being takes *pleasure* in the exercise of it:—he "*delights in mercy.*"
4. Nothing, capable of happiness, comes from his hand, except in circumstances of *positive felicity.*

(II.) *Evidence from the natural and moral world.*

(1.) The *dark* side. 1.) Positive evils on the globe: volcanoes, sterility, &c. 2.) Diseases and sufferings of the *human race.* 3.) Sufferings and death of *animals.*

(2.) The *bright* side. 1.) *Design* of every contrivance essentially beneficial: e. g., teeth are contrived to *eat*, not to ache. But to this may

be objected (1) *venomous* animals, and (2) animals *preying* upon one another.

As to (1.) So far as the animal itself is concerned, the contrivance is good.

As to (2.) The following points are to be considered. 1.) Immortality on earth is out of the question. 2.) Is not death in this way better than *decay*? 3.) The system is the spring of motion and activity to brutes.

The bright side. 2.) The happiness of *animal existence*. 3.) Many alleviations of positive evils. 4.) Many ills are chargeable upon man's own misconduct. Consider an *individual* case,—the *good* circumstances about him far counterbalance all other.

(3.) The theory of *optimism*: viz., that the *present* system is the best which the nature of things would admit.

1. The very principle of this hypothesis implies an unworthy notion of God: considering it (1) as to *natural*, (2) as to *moral* evils.
2. We deny, then, that "whatever is, is *best*." We can not only *conceive* a better state of things, but can show that the evils of the present state do not *necessarily* exist. *Sin* has entered into the world, and God is *just*, as well as *good*.
3. The state of the world exactly answers to the Scriptural representations of the relations between man and God. Illustrated by quotations from Gisborne, 1.) As to the actual appearance of the globe. 2.) By reference to the general deluge. 3.) By the human frame. 4.) By the occupations of man—farmers—shepherds—miners—manufacturers—merchants.

(III.) The *origin of evil*. (P. 428.) There are four leading opinions.

1 Necessity. 2. The Manichean doctrine of duality. 3. The doctrine that God is the author of sin. And 4. That evil is the result of the *abuse of moral freedom*.

1. Refutes itself. 2. Is now given up. 3. Found among the most unguarded Calvinistic writers, but now generally abandoned. 4. Is the opinion generally adopted, and agrees with the Scriptura' statement of the creation and fall of man.

(IV.) The *mercy* of God is a mode of his goodness.

X. HOLINESS. (Ch. vii.)

Preliminary. 1. It is clear that GOD "loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity."

2. And this from some *essential* principle of his nature. This principle we call *holiness*, which exhibits itself in two great branches, viz.:—

(I.) JUSTICE, 1. *Character of*, when *particular*, (not universal.)

(a.) Legislative, which determines man's duty and binds him to its performance.

(b.) Judicial or distributive, which respects rewards and punishments; and is either 1) *præmiative*, or 2) *vindictive*, but always impartial.

2. *Reconciled with the divine administration.*

(a.) By the fact that man is under a dispensation of mercy.

(b.) By the doctrine of *general judgment*, which is grounded on that of redemption.

3. *Inferences.*

(a.) That great offenders may prosper *in this life*, without impeachment of God's government.

(b.) That God's children may be afflicted and oppressed.

(c.) That an administration of grace may be apparently *unequal* without *injustice*. But,

(d.) As *nations* have no posthumous existence, national rewards and punishments have been in all ages visible and striking.

(II.) TRUTH, which in Scripture is contemplated under the two great branches of *veracity* and *faithfulness*.

1. His *veracity* regards his *word*. No deception here.

2. His *faithfulness* regards his *engagements*, which never fail.

A few general ascriptions of excellence may here be noticed. 1.) God is *perfect*. 2.) God is *all-sufficient*. 3.) God is *unsearchable*. Support each by Scriptural passages.

(C.)—PERSONS OF THE GODHEAD.

I.) DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. (Ch. viii, ix.)

1. *Preliminary* remarks and explanations.

1. This doctrine cannot be *demonstrated* either a priori or a posteriori Attempts of Poiret, Kidd, &c., noticed. It rests entirely on Scripture.

2. Pretensions to *explain* this doctrine are highly objectionable.

3. Perhaps it may be admitted that *types* and *symbols* of the mystery of the trinity are to be found in natural objects.

4. Explanation of the term *person*: 1.) In ordinary language. 2.) In a strict *philosophical* sense. It is not applied in the latter sense to the divine Being; but the distinct *persons* are represented as having a common foundation in *one being*: the *manner* of the union being incomprehensible. Objection to the term, as not being Scriptural, answered.

5. Leading differences of opinion among the orthodox. Howe, Waterland, Pearson, Bull.

II. *Importance* of the doctrine stated, (I.) Chiefly in answer to Dr. Priestley

1. The knowledge of GOD is fundamental to religion.

2. Dr. P. allows its necessity "to explain some particular texts." But we can show that these "texts" comprehend a large portion of Scripture.

3 Our views of God, as the object of our worship, are affected.

4 Dr. P. objects, "that *no fact in nature*, nor *purpose in morals*, requires this doctrine."

1.) *As to the natural world*, (1.) It *is* adapted to the scheme of orthodox Christianity, and *not* to Socinianism, which does not admit of redemption. (2.) The *duration* of the natural world, is another relation to theology. It was *made* for Christ.

2.) As to *morals*. (1.) Morals are conformity to a divine law, which must take its character of its Author. (2.) *Faith* is obedience to *command*, and therefore part of morals.

(II.) Importance of this doctrine, on broader grounds.

1. Our *love to God*, which is the substance of religion, is essentially affected by our views of this doctrine.
2. In other equally essential views, the denial of Christ's divinity essentially alters the Christian scheme, viz.
   1.) The doctrine of *atonement* is denied by Socinians, though inconsistently admitted by Arians.
   2.) Views of the *evil of sin* are essentially modified.
   3.) The character of *Christian experience* essentially changed, as to *repentance*, *faith*, *prayer*, love, &c.
   4.) The *religious affections* of *hope*, *trust*, *joy*, &c., are all interfered with.
   5.) *The language of the Church of Christ* must be altered and brought down to these views.
   6.) The doctrine of *divine* agency must be changed.
3. The denial of the doctrine of the trinity *affects the credit of the Holy Scriptures;* for if this doctrine be not contained in them, their tendency to mislead is obvious.

III. *Difficulties* are said to attend the reception of this doctrine. But,

1. Mere difficulty in conceiving of what is proper to God, forms no objection.
2. No *contradiction* is implied in this great doctrine.
3. The *Arian* and *Socinian* hypotheses do not relieve us from difficulties.

IV *Scripture testimony.* (Ch. ix.)

Preliminary. Every argument in favour of the trinity flows from the principle of the absolute UNITY of God, which is laid down in the Scriptures with the utmost solemnity, and guarded with the utmost care by precepts, threatenings, and promises. But in examining what the Scriptures teach concerning this ONE GOD, we find that,

A. *The very names of God have plural forms, and are connected with plural modes of speech.* (P. 467.)

Examples: Deuteronomy vi, 4; Aleim; Adonim, &c.

B. *Three persons*, and *three* ONLY, are *spoken of in Scripture under divine titles.* Example

1. Solemn form of Jewish benediction. Num. vi, 24–27.
2. The vision of Isaiah, with the allusions to it by St. John and St. Paul in the New Testament. (Pp. 470, 471.)
3. Various passages in the New Testament might be cited—in which sometimes *two*, sometimes *three*, but never more than three, persons are spoken of. 1 John v, 7, is laid out of the argument, as uncertain.

C. *The great proof on which the doctrine rests:*—the multiplied instances in which *two* persons are spoken of, as associated with God in his perfections. (P. 473.)

1. The outline of Scriptural testimony is given, *as to the* SON.
2. The same *as to the* SPIRIT.

Therefore, as the Scriptures uniformly declare but ONE GOD, and yet do throughout declare *three persons* DIVINE,—we harmonize these apparently opposite doctrines in the proposition—THE THREE PERSONS ARE ONE GOD These views are maintained in the orthodox church, and are chargeable with no greater mystery than is assignable to the Scriptures. We do not give up the *unity of God*. The Socinian unity is a unity of *one:* ours is a *unity of three.*

II.) DIVINITY OF CHRIST, (Ch. x–xv,) proved,

A. BY HIS PRE-EXISTENCE, (Ch. x.)
B. BECAUSE HE WAS THE JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, (Ch. xi.)
C. BECAUSE DIVINE TITLES ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM, (Ch. xii.)
D. BECAUSE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES BELONG TO HIM, (Ch. xiii.)
E. BECAUSE DIVINE ACTS ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM, (Ch. xiv.)
F. BECAUSE DIVINE WORSHIP IS PAID TO HIM, (Ch. xv.)

A. PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST. (Ch. x.)

The *pre-existence of Christ*, if established, though it does not affect the *Arian*, destroys the *Socinian* hypothesis: hence both ancient and modern Socinians have bent all arts of interpretation against those passages which expressly declare it, of which the following are examples:—

1. John i, 15: "He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he *was before me.*" The Socinians interpret the last clause in the sense of *dignity*, and not of *time*. But John uses the same phrase elsewhere in regard to priority of time. If the last referred to the *dignity* of Christ, it would have been εστι, not ην,—*he is*, not *he was*.
2. The passages which express that Christ came down from heaven.
   (1.) The early Socinians supposed that Christ was translated to heaven after his birth. Unsupported by Scripture.
   (2.) The modern Socinians conveniently resolve the whole into figure:—1. *Ascending* into heaven. 2. *Coming down* from heaven
3. John vi, 62: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend where he was before?"

4. The phrase, to "be *sent from* God."
5. John viii, 58: "Before Abraham was, I am."
6. John xvii, 5: "The glory which I had with thee before the world was."

It has thus been shown that Christ had an existence *previous to his incarnation, and previous to the very foundation of the world.*

B. JESUS CHRIST THE JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. (Ch. II.)

In the Old Testament we cannot fail to notice the frequent *supernatural appearances* to the ancient patriarchs and prophets. The facts cannot be disputed; and in order to show their bearing upon the question of the divinity of Christ, we have three propositions to establish, viz.:—

I. *The person who made these appearances was truly a* DIVINE PERSON.

1. *Proof.* He bears the *names* of the divine Being, and was the object of worship to the Israelites. (1.) *Hagar* in the wilderness. (2.) *Abraham* in the plains of Mamre. (3.) *Isaac* and *Jacob.* (4.) The same Jehovah visible to *Moses.* The same JEHOVAH attended the Israelites.

2. *Objections.* (1.) This personage is called "the Angel of the Lord." Ans. *Angel* is a designation of *office*, not of nature. The collation of a few passages will show that JEHOVAH and the *Angel of the Lord*, in this eminent sense, were the same person. (2.) The *Arian* hypothesis is, that the appearing angel was Christ personating the Deity. Shown to be untenable. (3.) The *Socinian* notion is the marvellous doctrine of *occasional personality*, to use Priestley's term. Mysterious and absurd enough.

II. *This divine person was* NOT *God the Father.*

1. The argument from the passage, "*No man hath seen God,*" &c. is plausible, but cannot be depended upon.
2. The real argument is from the appelation *angel.*

III. *This divine person* WAS *the promised Messiah, and consequently* JESUS CHRIST.

(1.) *Scriptural proof.*

1. Jeremiah asserts that the new covenant was to be made by the same person who made the old: "*Behold the days come,*" &c.
2. Malachi's striking prediction, "*Behold I will send my messenger,*" &c. This prophecy is expressly applied to Christ, by St. Mark.
3. "*The voice of him that crieth,*" &c. Here the application of the prophecy was expressly made to our Lord, by the Baptist
4. "*Behold a virgin shall conceive,*" &c. "*Unto us a child is born.*"
5. Psalm lxviii is applied by St. Paul to Christ.
6. *Christ* is represented by St. Peter, as preaching by his Spirit in the days of Noah.
7. St. Paul, 1 Cor., "*Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them* also tempted."

8. Heb. xii, 25, 26, "*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*"

(2.) Confirmation by the *testimony of the fathers*, viz.:—Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens, Origen, Theophilus, Cyprian, Hilary, and Basil.

(3.) *Two objections* to this doctrine from Scripture are easily answered.

1 "*God who at sundry times*," &c. Ans. We do allow the occasional manifestation of the Father to be recorded in the Old Testament.

2. "*If the word spoken by angels*," &c. Here the apostle refers to the *judicial* law which was given through angels. They were not the *authors* of the law, but the medium of its communication to men.

I. DIVINE TITLES ASCRIBED TO CHRIST. (Ch. xii.)

If the titles given to Christ in the Scriptures are such as can designate a divine Being, then is Christ *divine*, otherwise the Scriptures *deceive*.

I. The title JEHOVAH.

Instances of this have already been given, and indeed Socinians admit the fact by their attempts to explain it away:—thus Dr. Priestley asserts that the name JEHOVAH is sometimes given to *places*. Miserable pretence. Force of the argument distinctly stated. (P. 507.)

II. The title LORD, (Κύριος,) which is applied to *Christ* in the New Testament, is in its *highest sense* universally allowed to belong to GOD: and we can show that it is applied to *Christ* in this *highest sense*.

1. Both by the LXX. and the writers of the New Testament, it is the term by which the name JEHOVAH is translated. (P. 508.)

2. When the title is not employed in the New Testament to render the name *Jehovah*, it is still manifest, by the context, that the writers considered and used it as a *divine* title. (P. 510.)

III. The title GOD. It is admitted even by Socinians, that Jesus Christ is called God. We have then to show

1. *That in its highest sense, the term* GOD *involves the notion of absolute divinity.* Sir I. Newton and Dr. S. Clarke consider it a *relative* term, importing, strictly, nothing more than *dominion*.

Ans. (1.) By Dr. Waterland. (2.) By Dr. Randolph.

2. *That the term is found used of Christ in this highest sense.* (P. 514.)

(1.) Matt. i, 23, "EMANUEL—God with us." The Socinians object to this passage, 1.) That it is of doubtful authority; but this objection rests on (confessedly) a narrow foundation. 2.) That the divinity of Christ can no more be argued from the name EMANUEL, than the divinity of Eli, whose name signifies "*my God.*" But this was the *common* name of Eli; not so Emanuel, which was a *descriptive* title, given by revelation.

(2.) Luke i, 16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD," &c.

(3.) John i, 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the WORD was with God, and the Word was God," &c. 1.) The *Logos* in this passage is called God, in the highest sense. Three reasons. 2.) Criticism on the Greek article, annexed by Dr. Middleton. 3.) Socinians assert that γίνομαι never signifies *to create*. Ans. It is thus used in the following passages: Heb. iv, 3; Heb. xi, 3; James iii, 9. 4.) They translate the passage also, "All things were made *for* him." This interpretation effectually destroys the other. But διά, with a genitive, denotes not the *final* but the *efficient* cause.

(4.) John xx, 28: "Thomas answered . . . my Lord and my God." Socinians make this a mere ejaculation!

(5.) Titus ii, 13: "Looking for that blessed hope . . . great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

(6.) Heb. i, 8: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Two Socinian objections answered.

(7.) 1 John v, 20: "This is the true God, and eternal life."

(8.) Rom. ix, 5: "Whose are the fathers . . . God blessed forever." 1.) Four points to be noted in regard to this text. 2.) All attempts to weaken the force of this powerful passage have failed.

IV The title "KING OF ISRAEL." The writers of the New Testament could not use this appellation in a lower sense than that which it holds in the Old Testament: it is sufficient to show that it was understood by the Jews to imply *divinity*. 1.) Nathanael's exclama-
M tion, and 2.) The expressions of the revilers at the crucifixion, are sufficient proofs of this.

V The title "SON OF GOD," demands a larger notice, inasmuch as Socinians restrain its significance to the *mere humanity* of Christ; and many who hesitate not to admit the divinity of Christ, coincide with the Socinians as to the Sonship. This subject is treated (pp. 528–562) as follows:—

The fact is not disputed, that the title Son of God was applied to Christ

The question then is, *what this title imported*. One opinion is,

(1.) That the title was assumed by Christ because of his *miraculous conception*. But

1. Our Lord always permitted the Jews to consider him the son of Joseph.
2. When arguing with the Jews, expressly to establish that God was his Father, Christ made no reference to the miraculous conception.
3. Nathanael knew not but Christ was son of Joseph, yet called him "*The Son of God*, and the King of Israel."
4. The confession of Peter. "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the*

living God," was made without reference to the miraculous conception; and probably before that fact was made known to the apostles.

(II.) Another opinion is, that the title, "SON OF GOD," was simply an appellation of Messiah,—an *official*, not a *personal* designation. But the evangelical history fully refutes this notion, by showing that the Jews regarded the title "SON OF GOD" as *necessarily* involving a claim to divinity, but did not so regard "MESSIAH."

(III.) (P. 531.) In the *Old Testament* we find that the title, "Son of God," was a *personal* designation; that the Sonship was *essential*, but the Messiahship *accidental*.

1. Psa. ii: "Thou art my SON, this day have I begotten thee." (1.) This cannot be interpreted with reference to the miraculous conception. (2.) Nor with reference to the resurrection; for 1.) Christ was asserted to be the "beloved *Son*," *before* his resurrection; and 2.) Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, tells us that the resurrection of Christ was the *declaration* of his Sonship, not the *ground* of it. Argument corroborated by a quotation from Witsius.

2. Proverbs viii, 22. Solomon introduces the *personal* wisdom of God, under the same relation of a *Son*.

The ancient Jewish writers speak of the *generation* of "*Wisdom*," and by that term mean "*the World*."

3. Micah v, 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata," &c. This passage carefully distinguishes the human nature from the eternal generation:—as *two* goings forth are spoken of, 1.) A natural one, "*from Bethlehem to Judah;*" 2.) Another and higher, "*from the days of eternity.*"

The glosses of Priestley and others, which would make this passage refer to the *promises* or *purpose* of God from everlasting, are shown to be absurd.

4. Prov. xxx, 4: "What is his name, and what is his *Son's* name," &c. Here there is no reference to Messiahship.

Thus the Scriptures of the Old Testament furnished the Jews with the idea of a personal Son in the divine nature.

IV.) The same ideas of divine Sonship are suggested in the *New Testament*. (P. 539.)

1. "When Jesus was baptized . . . This is my *beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased." (1.) This name, Son of God, was not here given with reference to the *resurrection*. (2.) Nor with reference to the *Messiahship*. Nor (3.) With reference to the *miraculous conception*. (P. 540.) It must follow then that CHRIST was, in a higher nature than his human, and for a higher reason than an *official* one, the "Son of God."

2. The epithet, "*only begotten*," affords further proof of the Sonship of Christ in his divine nature. (P. 542.)
3. Those passages which declare that all things were made by *the Son*, and that God "*sent* his *Son*," imply that the Creator was the Son of God before he was sent into the world. (P. 543.)

It is assumed, but not proved, by some, that the title Son is thus applied by a mere interchange of titles between the human and divine nature.

4. Those passages *which connect the title "Son" immediately, and by way of eminence, with the divinity*, remain to be considered. (P. 545.) Such are—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John v, 17. "I and my Father are one." John x, 30. "Art thou *the Son of God*?" Ans. by Christ: "Ye say that I am."
5. In the *apostolic writings* we find equal proof that the title "Son of God" was used even by way of *opposition* to the human nature. (1.) Rom. i, 3, 4: "Declared to be the Son of God with power," &c. (2.) The apostle's argument in the first chapter of Epistle to Hebrews. (3.) Rom. viii, 3: "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." (4.) "Moses was faithful as a *servant*, but Christ as a SON." (5.) All those passages in which the *first person* is called the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recapitulation of the argument. (Pp. 553, 554.)

(V.) *Importance* of the admission of the eternal filiation of our Lord. (P. 554.)

Some divines, believing the divinity of Christ, have yet opposed the eternal Sonship; but they have nearly, if not quite, adopted Unitarian modes of interpretation; and on a point confessedly fundamental, they differ from the opinions held by the orthodox church in all ages. The following consequences of denying the divine filiation of Christ are worthy of note:—

1. A loose method of interpretation.
2. The destruction of all *relation* among the persons of the Godhead.
3. The loss of the Scriptural idea, that the Father is the *fountain* of Deity.
4. The same of the perfect *equality*, and yet *subordination*, of the Son.
5. The overthrow of the doctrine of the love of the Father in the gift of his Son. Episcopius's argument.

(VI.) *Objections* to the divine Sonship considered. (Pp. 558–562.)

VI. The title WORD. (P. 562.) Used principally by the evangelist John. Two inquiries arise here, viz.:—

I. *Whence the evangelist drew the use of this appellation?* Ans.

(1.) From the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament: by quotations from which it is shown to be a *theological* and not a *philosophic* title; and one which had received the stamp of inspiration. a. Genesis xv, 1. b. Psalm xviii, 30. c. 1 Samuel iii, 21. d. 2 Samuel vii, 21; 1 Chronicles xvii, 19.

(2.) The *Targums* further evince the theological origin of this appellation. Illustrated by a number of quotations and references. (Pp. 564–567.)

(3.) Philo and the philosophic Jews, then, may be spared in this inquiry; but it can be shown, 1. That if Philo possessed the idea of a personal Logos, he did not derive it from Plato. 2. That he *did* derive it from the established theology of his nation. (Pp. 568–571.)

II. *What reasons led the evangelist to adopt this appellation?* (P. 572.) It is supposed that John wrote with a view to the suppression of the Gnostic heresy: in order to afford the clearest refutation of those who denied the pre-existence of Christ.

III. *Argument from its use, against Socinianinism.* (P. 575.)

1. St. John says, the Logos "was that light, but John Baptist was not." Here is a parallel between *two persons*—not between a *person* and an *attribute*.

2. The Logos became man. But how could an *attribute* become man? The personality of the Logos being established, his divinity follows of course.

D. CHRIST POSSESSED OF DIVINE ATTRIBUTES. (Ch. xiii.)

God is made known to us by his *attributes*. Should, then, the same attributes be found ascribed in Scripture to *Christ*, we infer directly that *Christ* is *God*.

I. ETERNITY is ascribed to Christ. (1.) Isaiah ix, 6. (2.) Rev. i, 17, 18. (3.) Rev. i, 8. (4.) Hebrews xiii, 8. (5.) Hebrews i, 10–12. (6.) "Eternal life."

II. OMNIPRESENCE is ascribed to him. (1.) "No man hath ascended up to heaven," &c. (2.) "Where two or three are gathered together," &c. (3.) "Lo, I am with you always," &c. (4.) "By him all things consist."

III. OMNISCIENCE is ascribed to Christ. Two kinds of knowledge *peculiar* to God:—

1. A perfect knowledge of the thoughts and intents of the human heart. This is expressly attributed to Christ. (1.) "*He knew what was in man.*" (2.) The word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (3.) Interpretation of Mark xiii, 32.

2. The knowledge of futurity. This is also ascribed to Christ, John vi. 64, and xiii, 11; and all the *predictions* uttered by him, and which are nowhere referred by him to *inspiration*, are in proof of his possessing this attribute.

IV. OMNIPOTENCE is ascribed to Christ. (1.) Rev. i, 8. (2.) To the Jews he said, "What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (3.) All the Scriptural argument from the ascription of divine attributes to Christ, may be summed up with his own remarkable declaration, "All things which the Father hath are mine." John xvi, 15.

E. DIVINE ACTS ARE ASCRIBED TO CHRIST. (Ch. xiv.)

I. *Creation.* Socinians admit that creation out of nothing is the work of a divine power, and therefore interpret those passages of the New Testament which speak of Christ as a *Creator*, as referring to a *moral* creation, or to the *regulation* of all things in the evangelical dispensation. Absurdity of this.

1 The creation of "all things" is ascribed to Christ, in the introduction to St. John's Gospel. This can only be understood of a physical creation.

2. "By whom also he made the worlds." Heb. i, 2. Two Socinian glosses are offered.

(1.) To render the words, "*for* whom also," &c. But *δια* with a genitive, never signifies the *final cause*, setting aside the absurdity of the worlds being made for a mere man.

(2.) To understand "the worlds"—*τους αιωνας*—for the gospel dispensation;—but the same phrase is used in the eleventh chapter, where it can only be understood of a *physical* creation:—and in the close of the first chapter the apostle reiterates the doctrine of the creation of the world by Jesus Christ.

3. Colossians i, 15–17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created," &c.

Socinian gloss:—"Here is meant the great change introduced into the moral world by the dispensation of the gospel."

(1.) The Arian notion, that by "first-born" is meant "first created," is easily refuted. As to *date* of his being, he was "before all created things." As to the *manner* of it, he was by *generation*, not *creation*.

(2.) As for the Socinian gloss, it makes the apostle say, that Christ was the first-made member of the Christian Church; and the reason for this is, that he made the Church!

II. The *preservation* of the universal frame of things is ascribed to Christ.

III. The final *destruction* of material nature is also expressly attributed to him.

IV. Our Lord claims, generally, to perform the works of his Father: also, to possess original miraculous powers.

V. He promises to send the *Holy Spirit*.

VI. The *forgiveness of sins*, unquestionably a peculiar act of Deity, was claimed by Christ.

F DIVINE WORSHIP PAID TO CHRIST. (Ch. xv.)

(a.) *The fact established.* (Pp. 596-606.)

I. Prior to his ascension.

1.) The case of the *leper*. 2.) Of the blind man. 3.) The disciples. N. B. Our Lord did not receive these acts of worship as a *civil ruler*.

II. Subsequent to his ascension.

1.) Luke xxiv, 51, 52: "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, *and they worshipped him*," &c. 2.) The prayer of the apostles, when filling up the place of Judas. 3.) Supplications of Stephen, the protomartyr. Futility of the Socinian gloss, and that of Dr. Priestley. 4.) Paul's prayer, when afflicted with the "thorn in the flesh." 5.) Paul's prayer in behalf of the Thessalonians.

III. Adoration of Christ among heavenly beings.

1.) "Let all the angels of God worship him." Psalm xcvii. Horsley's Remarks. 2.) Psalm lxxii. 3.) The Book of Revelation.

IV. All the *doxologies* to Christ, and all the benedictions made in his name, in common with those of the Father and the Holy Spirit, are forms of worship.

(b.) *Its bearing examined.* (P. 607.)

1. From the avowed *religious sentiments* of the apostles, they could not pay religious worship to Christ unless they considered him a divine person.
2. We collect the same from their *uniform practice*.
3. The Arian doctrine of *supreme* and *inferior* worship refuted by Dr. Waterland.
4. The Socinians, more consistently, refuse to "honour the Son as . . . . . the Father." The passage, Philip. ii, 5–7, is shown to contain the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, without which it cannot be rationally interpreted.

III.) PERSON OF CHRIST. (Ch. xvi.)

I. HUMANITY *of Christ*. In the early church it was necessary to establish that Christ possessed a real human nature. Notice the following

1. *Erroneous opinions*. 1.) The Gnostics denied the real existence of the *body* of Christ. 2.) The Apollinarian heresy rejected the existence of a human *soul* in our Lord. 3.) Among those who held the union of the two natures in Christ, there were various opinions—those of the Nestorians, Monophisites, and Monothelites.

2. The *true sense* of Scripture was given by the *Council of Chalcedon*, in the fifth century:—with whose formula the Athanasian Creed agrees, and the orthodox church has adopted this creed. Certainly, without keeping in view the *completeness* of each nature, we shall find it impossible, in many places, to apprehend the sense of the Scriptures (Pp. 618, 619.)

II. *The* UNION *of the two natures of Christ in one hypostasis* is equally essential to the full exposition of the Scriptures. The following passages illustrate this:—

1. "The Word was made *flesh.*"
2. "The Church of *God*, purchased by *his own blood.*"
   Digression—to examine Dr. P. Smith's view of orthodox language.
3. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily.*" Col. ii, 9
4. "When he had *by himself* purged our sins," &c. Heb. i, 3.

These and similar passages may be embraced under the two following classes:—1.) Those which speak of the *efficacy* of the sufferings of Christ for remission of sins. 2.) Those which argue from the compassion, &c., of our Lord, to the exercise of confidence in him.

III. *Errors as to the person of Christ.*

1. Arianism: so called from its author, Arius, whose characteristic tenet was that Christ was the first and most exalted of creatures.
2. Sabellianism: which, asserting the divinity of the Son and the Spirit, and denying the personality of both, stands equally opposed to Arianism and Trinitarianism.
3. Socinianism, in which the two former are now nearly merged. This last has been fully refuted by the establishment of the Scripture doctrine of a trinity of divine persons in the unity of the Godhead, which involves a refutation of the other two heresies.

(IV.) PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST. (Ch. xvii.)

I. As to the *manner* of the Being of the Holy Ghost—the orthodox doctrine is, that as Christ is GOD by an eternal FILIATION, so the Spirit is God by PROCESSION from the Father and the Son. The doctrine of procession rests on direct Scripture authority, as stated by Bishop Pearson.

1. "Even the Spirit of truth, which PROCEEDETH from the Father." John xv, 26.
2. The very expressions which are spoken of the Holy Spirit in relation to the FATHER, are also spoken of the same Spirit in relation to the SON.

II. *Arius* regarded the Spirit as created by Christ; but afterward his followers considered the Holy Ghost as the *exerted energy* of God, which notion, with some modifications, is adopted by Socinians.

III. *Scriptural argument* for the personality and deity of the Holy Ghost.

(a.) From the frequent association in Scripture of a *person*, under that appellation, with two other persons, one of whom, "the *Father*," is by all acknowledged to be divine; and the ascription to *each*, or to the three in *union*, of the same acts, titles, authority, and worship, in an equal degree.

1. Association of the three persons in *creative acts.*
2. Do. in the *preservation* of all things.
3. Do. in the *inspiration* of the prophets.
4. Do. as objects of supreme worship.
5. Do. in the form of baptism.

(b.) Some other arguments, (p 637,) for

(1.) The *personality* of the Spirit. 1.) He *proceeds* from the Father and Son, and cannot therefore be *either*. 2.) Many Scriptures are absurd unless the Holy Ghost be a person. 3.) The Holy Ghost is spoken of in many passages where personification is impossible. 4.) The use of *masculine* pronouns and relatives in the Greek of the New Testament, in connexion with the *neuter* noun πνευμα—Spirit.

(2.) The *divinity* of the Spirit. 1.) He is the subject of blasphemy 2.) He is called *God*. 3.) He is the source of *inspiration*.

II. DOCTRINES RELATING TO MAN.—(Ch. xviii–xxix.)

(A.)—ORIGINAL SIN.

I. *Man's primitive condition.* (Pp. 3–19.)
II. Testimony of Scripture as *to the fall of man.* (Pp. 19–43.)
III. *Results of the fall, to Adam and his posterity.* (Pp. 43–87.)

I. MAN'S PRIMITIVE CONDITION.

(I.) Adam was made under *law*, as all his descendants are born under law.

1. There is evidence of the existence of a *moral* as well as a *natural* government of the *universe.*
2. The *law* under which all moral agents—angels, devils, or men—are placed, there is reason to believe, is, in its great principles, the *same.*
3. Each particular law supposes the general one. *Law* was not *first* introduced into the world when the law of Moses was engraven on the tables of stone.

(II.) The history of *man's creation* in brief. (P. 8.)

1. The *manner* of the narration indicates something peculiar and eminent in the being formed. "And God said, Let us make man in our image," &c.
2. The *image* of God—in what did it consist?
   (1.) Not in the *body.*
   (2.) Not in the *dominion* granted to man in this lower world.
   (3.) Nor in any *one* essential quality:—as the evidence of Scripture is sufficiently explicit, that it comprises what may be lost and regained.
   (4.) But, theologically speaking, we have

(a.) The *natural* image of God—consisting of *spirituality, immortality,* and *intellectual powers.*

(b.) The *moral* image proved from the following passages of Scripture:—(1.) Ecc. vii: "God made man *upright.*" (2.) Col. iii, 10. (3.) Eph. iv, 24. (4.) "And God saw . . . . and behold it was very good."

(5.) As to the *degree* of Adam's perfection in the image of God, there are two extreme opinions. Without falling into either of these, we have the following conclusions:—

1. Adam was *sinless* both in act and principle.
2. He possessed the *faculty* of knowledge, and also
3. Holiness and righteousness, which express not only sinlessness, but positive and active virtues.

3. *Objection* to the *creation* of man in the moral image of God, by Dr. Taylor, answered.

(1.) The fallacy of the objection lies in confounding *habits* of holiness with the *principle.*

(2.) Answer quoted from Wesley.

(3.) From Edwards.

4. *Final* cause of the creation of man—the display of the glory of God, and principally of his moral perfections.

II. The fall of man. (P. 19.)

The Mosaic account, (the garden, serpent, &c.,) teaches of, (1) the existence of an evil spirit; (2) the introduction of a state of moral corruptness into human nature; and (3) a vicarious atonement for sin. There are three classes of opinions held among the interpreters of this account.

(I.) *Class.* Those which *deny the literal sense,* and regard the whole narration as an instructive *mythos.*

(A.) Two *facts* sufficiently refute these notions.

1. The account of the fall of the first pair is a *part of a continuous history.* If, then, the account of the *fall* may be excepted as allegorical, any subsequent portion of the Pentateuch may in like manner be taken away.
2. The *literal sense* of the history is referred to, and reasoned upon, *as such,* in various parts of Scripture. (Pp. 22, 23.)

(B.) *Objections* have been started to the literal and historical interpretation, of which the following are specimens:—

1 "It is unreasonable to suppose that the fruit of the *tree of life* could confer immortality." But

(1.) Why could not this tree be the *appointed* means of preserving health and life?

(2.) Why may not the eating of the fruit be regarded as a sacramental act?

2. "How could the fruit of the *tree of knowledge* have any effect upon the intellectual powers?"
   (1.) Surely the tree might be called "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," because by eating of its fruit man came to know, by sad experience, the value of the good he had forfeited, &c.; or,
   (2.) It was the *test* of Adam's fidelity, and hence the name was proper.
3. Objection has been made to the account of the *serpent*, (a.) That it makes "the invisible tempter assume the body of an animal." Who can prove this to be impossible? (b.) "But the serpent spoke!" So did Balaam's ass. (c.) "But Eve was not surprised." Why should she? or, if she were, the history need not mention so slight a matter. (d.) "But the serpent was unjustly sentenced, if merely an instrument." The serpent certainly held its rank at the pleasure of the Creator.

(C.) *Tradition* comes in to support the literal sense of the history.
1. The ancient Jewish writers, Apocrypha, &c.
2. The various systems of heathen mythology—Greek, Egyptian Indian, Roman, Gothic, and Hindoo.

(II.) *Class.* Those who interpret the account *in part literally and in part allegorically.* (P. 30.) Sufficiently answered by quotation from Bishop Horsley.

(III.) *Class.* Those who believe that the history has, in perfect accordance with the literal interpretation, a mystical and higher sense than the letter. This sentiment, without running into the extravagances of mysticism, is the orthodox doctrine. The *history* is before us;—but rightly to understand it, these four points should be kept in view, viz.:—

1. *Man was in a state of trial.*
   (1.) This involved power of *obedience and disobedience.*
   (2.) That which determines to the one or the other, is the *will.*
   (3.) Our first parents were subject to temptation from *intellectual pride*, from *sense*, and from *passion.*
   (4.) To resist such temptation, prayer, vigilance, &c., were requisite.
2. *The prohibition of a certain fruit was but one part of the law under which man was placed.*
   (1.) Distinction between *positive and moral* precepts.
   (2.) The *moral reason* for this positive precept—as indeed for probably all others—may be easily discovered.
3. *The serpent was but the instrument of the real tempter*, who was that evil spirit whose Scriptural appellatives are the *Devil* and *Satan.* Existence and power of this spirit clearly declared in Scripture.
4. The curse of the serpent was symbolical of the punishment of Satan.

This symbolical interpretation defended by three considerations. (Pp. 39–42.)

III. Results of the fall. (Pp. 43–87.)

(I.) To Adam, inevitable *death*, after a temporary life of severe labour (Pp. 43–51.)

1. Statement of opinions as to the extent and application of this penalty
   (a.) Pelagian notion,—Adam would have died had he not sinned.
   (b.) Pseudo-Arminian doctrine of Whitby and others. (Pp. 43–45.)
   (c.) Arminius's doctrine, taken from his writings. With this nearly agree the Remonstrants, Augsburg Confession, Church of England, French and Scottish churches.
2. Import of the term *death*, as used in Scripture. (P. 48.)
   (a.) "Death came into the world by sin."
   (b.) It does not imply annihilation.
   (c.) It extends to the *soul* as well as to the body, thus embracing (1.) Bodily death, i. e., the separation of the soul from the body. (2.) Spiritual death, i. e., the separation of the soul from God. (3.) Eternal death, i. e., separation from God, and a positive infliction of his wrath in a future state.

   Taylor's objection answered by Wesley and Edwards.

(II.) This sentence extended to Adam's *posterity*. (Pp. 52–61.)

1. The testimony of Scripture explicitly establishes a *federal connexion* between Adam and his descendants. Rom. v; 1 Cor. xv, 22.
2. The *imputation of Adam's sin* to his posterity, is the result of this connexion. Not *mediate*—not *immediate*—but the *legal result* of sin.
3. The *consequences* of this imputation are, 1.) Death of the body. 2.) Spiritual death. 3.) Eternal death.
4. *Objections* are raised against this doctrine—of two kinds, viz.:—one against *high Calvinism*, which we leave to take care of itself; and the other against the *legal* part of this transaction, without considering, in connexion with it, the evangelical scheme. The case may be considered
   (1.) With regard to *adults*. The remedial scheme offers, a.) In opposition to *bodily death*—the *resurrection*. b.) In opposition to *spiritual death*—spiritual life. c.) In opposition to *eternal death*—eternal life.
   (2.) With regard to *infants*. a.) The benefits of Christ's death are coextensive with the sin of Adam, (Rom. v, 18;) hence all children dying in infancy partake of the *free gift*. b.) Infants are not indeed born justified; nor are they capable of that voluntary acceptance of the benefits of the free gift which is necessary in the case of adults: but, on the other hand, they cannot *reject* it; and it is by the rejection of it that adults perish. c.) The *process* by which grace is communicated to infants is not revealed: the ad-

ministration doubtless differs from that employed toward adults.
d.) Certain *instrumental* causes may be considered in the case of children, viz., the intercession of Christ; ordinances of the church; prayers of parents, &c.

(III.) *The moral condition in which men are actually born into the world.*

I. Several facts of *experience* are to be accounted for.

1. That in all ages great and general *national* wickedness has prevailed.
2. The *strength of the tendency* to this wickedness, marked by two circumstances:—1.) The greatness of the crimes to which men have abandoned themselves. 2.) The number of restraints against which this tide of evil has urged its course.
3. The *seeds* of the vices may be *discovered in children* in their earliest years.
4. *Every man* is conscious of a natural tendency to many evils.
5. The passions, appetites, and inclinations, make strong resistance, when man determines to renounce his evil courses.

II. To account for these facts, we derive *from Scripture* the hypothesis,—*that man is by nature totally corrupt and degenerate, and of himself incapable of any good thing.* The following passages contain this doctrine:—1.) Gen. v, 3: "Adam begat a son in his own likeness." 2.) Gen. vi, 5: "Every imagination," &c. 3.) Gen. viii, 21: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." 4.) Book of Job xi, 12; v, 7; xiv, 47; xv, 14. 5.) Psalm li, 5; lviii, 3, 4. 6.) Pro. xxii, 15; xxix, 15. 7.) Romans iii, 10, quoted from Psalm xiv. 8.) That class of passages which speak of *evil* as a distinguishing mark not of any one man, but of *human nature:* Jeremiah, &c. 9.) Our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, John iii. 10.) Argument in third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

The doctrine of the *natural and universal corruption* of man's nature, thus obtained from Scripture, fully accounts for the above-mentioned five facts of experience. Let us see how far they can be explained on

III. The theory of man's *natural innocence and purity.* (P. 74.) This doctrine refers these phenomena to

1. General bad example. But 1.) This does not account for the *introduction* of wickedness. 2.) How could bad example become *general*, if men are generally disposed to *good.* 3.) This very hypothesis admits the *power of evil example*, which is almost giving up the matter in dispute. 4.) This theory does not account for the *strong bias* to evil in men, nor for the vicious tempers of children, nor for the *difficulty* of virtue.

The advocates of this doctrine refer also to

2 Vicious education, to account for these phenomena. But 1.) Where did Cain get his vicious education? 3.) Why should education be *generally* bad, unless men are *predisposed* to evil. 3.) But, in

fact, education in all countries has in some degree *opposed* vice. 4.) As for the other facts, education is placed upon the same ground as example.

V *Some take a milder view of the case* than the orthodox, denying these tendencies to various excesses to be sinful, until *they are approved by the will.* (P. 77.) But why this *universal compliance of the will* with what is known to be evil, unless there be naturally a corrupt state of the mind, which is what we contend for. The *death* of children proves that all men are "constituted" and treated as "sinners."

V. *Nature of original sin.*

1 A privation of the image of God, according to Arminius.

2. No *infusion of evil* into the nature of man by God, but positive evil, as the *effect*, is connected with privation of the life of God, as the *cause.*

3. As to the *transmission* of this corrupt nature, the Scriptural doctrine seems to be that the soul is *ex traduce*, and not by immediate creation from God. This doctrine does not necessarily tend to materialism.

4 It does not follow from the corruption of human nature that there can be nothing virtuous among men before regeneration. (P. 83.) But all that is good in its *principle* is due to the Holy Spirit, whose influences are afforded to all, in consequence of the atonement offered for all. The following reasons may be assigned for the apparent virtues that are noticed among unregenerate men:— 1.) The understanding of man cannot reject demonstrated truth. 2.) The interests of men are often connected with right and wrong. 3.) The seeds of sin need exciting circumstances for their full development. 4.) All sins cannot show themselves in all men. 5.) Some men are more powerfully bent to one vice: some to another.

But all *virtues grounded on principle*, wherever seen among men, are to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit, which has been vouchsafed to "*the world*," through the atonement.

(B.)—REDEMPTION. (Ch. xix–xxix.)

(I.) PRINCIPLES OF REDEMPTION. (Ch. xix–xxii.)

I. *Principles of God's moral government.* (Ch. xix.)

The penalty of death was not immediately executed in all its extent upon the first sinning pair. *Why was it not?* In order to answer this question, the character of God, and the principles of his moral government, will be briefly examined.

(I.) The divine character is illustrated by the extent and severity of the punishments denounced against transgression. (P. 88.)

(II.) It is more fully illustrated by the testimony of God himself in the Scriptures, (p. 89,) where

1. The *divine holiness*, and

2. The *divine justice*, are abundantly declared. Justice is either, 1)

universal, or 2) particular,—which latter is *commutative*, (respecting equals,) or *distributive*, (which is exercised only by governors.) Of the strictness and severity of the distributive justice of God, the sentence of death is sufficient evidence.

III.) Connexion between the essential justice of God, and *such* a constitution of law and government. (P. 91.)

1 The creation of free human beings involved the possibility of evil volitions and acts, and consequently misery.

2. To prevent these evils was the end of the *divine government*, the first act of which was the publication of the will or *law* of God: the second, to give motives to obedience, happiness, justice, fear.

3. It was *necessary* to secure obedience, that the highest penalty should be affixed to transgression.

4. Admitting its *necessity*, its institution was demanded by 1.) The holiness; 2.) The justice; and 3.) The goodness of God.

(IV.) Does the justice of God *oblige* him to execute the penalty? The opponents of the doctrine of atonement deny this; but we can show that

1. *Sin cannot be forgiven by the mere prerogative of God:* for

(1.) God cannot give up his right to *obedience*, without indifference to moral rectitude.

(2.) Nor can the Deity give up his right to *punish disobedience*, without either (a) *partiality*, if pardon be granted to a *few;* or (b) the abrogation, in effect, of law, if pardon be extended to *all.*

2. *Nor does* REPENTANCE, *on the part of the offender*, place him in a new relation, and thus render him a fit object of pardon. Those who hold this doctrine, admit the necessity of *something* which shall make it *right* as well as *merciful* for God to forgive. But we deny repentance to be that something; for

(1.) We find no intimation in Scripture that the penalty of the law is not to be executed in case of repentance.

(2.) It is not true that repentance changes the legal relation of the guilty to God, whom they have offended. They are offenders still, though penitent.

(3.) So far from repentance producing this change of relation, we have proofs to the contrary, both from the Scriptures and the established course of providence.

4.) The true nature of repentance, as stated in the Scriptures, is overlooked by those who hold this doctrine.

5.) (P. 101.) In the *gospel*, which professedly lays down the means by which men are to obtain the pardon of their sins, that pardon is not connected with mere repentance.

II *Death of Christ propitiatory.* (Ch. xx.)

In this and the two following chapters, we investigate that method of love, wisdom, and justice, by which a merciful God justifies the ungodly.

first, examining the statements of the *New Testament; secondly*, the sacrifices of the *law;* and *thirdly*, the *patriarchal* sacrifices:—from which investigation we hope to show clearly the unity of the three great dispensations of religion to man, the *patriarchal*, *Levitical*, and *Christian*, in the great principle, "that without the shedding of blood there is no remission." And first,

A. Proof from the *New Testament.* (Ch. xx.)

I. Man's salvation is ascribed in the New Testament to *the death of Christ*, and

1. The *Socinian* considers the death of Christ merely as the *means by which* repentance is produced in the heart of man.
2. The *Arian* connects with it that kind of *merit* which arises from a generous and benevolent self-devotion. But

II. The New Testament represents the death of Christ as *necessary* to salvation; not as the meritorious *means*, but as the meritorious *cause.*

1. The necessity of Christ's death follows the admission of his *divinity.*
2. The matter is put beyond question by the direct testimony of Scripture: "thus it *behooved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead," &c.

III. The New Testament informs us that Christ died "*for us*," that is, in our room and stead. (P. 106.)

1. All those passages in which Christ is said to have died "*for*" (ὑπερ or αντι) men, prove that he died for us not *consequently* but *directly*, as a *substitute.*
2. Those passages in which he is said to have "*borne the punishment due to our offences*," prove the same thing.

   Grotius clearly proves that the Scriptures represent our sins as the *impulsive* cause of the death of Christ.
3. The passage in Isaiah liii, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him," &c., is applied to Christ by the apostles.
4. The apostle Paul—2 Cor. v, 21.
5. Gal. iii, 13.

IV. Some passages of the New Testament connect, with the death of Christ, the words *propitiation*, *atonement*, and *reconciliation.* (P. 112.)

1. *Propitiation.*
   (1.) Definition—to propitiate is to *atone*, to turn away the wrath of an offended person.
   (2.) The Socinians, in their improved version, admit that it was "the pacifying of an offended party;" but insist that Christ is a propitiation, because "by his gospel he brings sinners to repentance, and thus averts the divine displeasure." On this ground, *Moses* was a propitiation also.
   (3.) Socinians also deny the existence of *wrath* in God:—in order to show that propitiation, in a *proper* sense, cannot be taught in

Scripture. But Scripture abundantly asserts that "God *is angry with the wicked.*"

In holding this Scriptural doctrine, we do not assert the existence of wrath as a *vengeful passion* in the divine mind: this is one of the many caricatures of orthodoxy by Socinianism.

2 *Reconciliation*, (p. 117,) occurs, Col. i, 19, 22; Rom. v, 10, 11; 2 Cor. v, 18, 19.

(1.) The expressions "*reconciliation*," "*making peace*," imply a previous state of *mutual* hostility between God and man. This relation is a legal one, as that of sovereign and criminal. The term *enmity*, used as it respects God, is unfortunate; but certainly something more is implied in reconciliation than man's laying aside his enmity to God. (P. 118.)

(2.) Various passages of Scripture go directly to prove this. (P. 119.) Rom. v, 11; 2 Cor. v, 19; Eph. ii, 16.

(3.) Socinian objection to the doctrine of reconciliation answered. (P. 121.)

V. Some texts speak of *redemption* in connexion with the death of Christ, e. g., Rom. iii, 24; Gal. iii, 13; Eph. i, 7; 1 Pet. i, 18, 19; 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20. (P. 122.)

(1.) The Socinian notion of a gratuitous deliverance is refuted by the very terms used in the above-cited passages: such as λυτροω, to redeem, &c.

(2.) The means by which it has been attempted to evade the force of these statements must be refuted. They are

1. "That the term redemption is sometimes used for simple deliverance, when no price is supposed to be given." Answer,
   a. The occasional use of the term in an improper manner, cannot be urged against its strict signification.
   b. Our redemption by Christ is emphatically spoken of in connexion with the γυτρον, or redemption *price;* but this word is never added to the deliverance effected for the Israelites by Moses.
2. "That our interpretation of these passages would involve the absurdity of paying a price to Satan." Answer,
   a. The idea of redemption is not to be confined to the purchasing of a captive.
   b Nor does it follow, even in that case, that the price must be paid to him who detains the captive. Our captivity to Satan is judicial, and satisfaction is to be made, not to the jailer, but to him whose *law* has been violated.
3. "That our doctrine is inconsistent with the freeness of the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins." (P. 127.) Answer,
   a. Dr. Priestley himself, in requiring penitence from the sinner, admits that grace may be free, while not unconditional.
   b The passage of St. Paul which Dr. P. quotes, runs thus: "Being

justified freely by his grace, through the *redemption* which is in Christ Jesus."

c. When sin is spoken of as a *debt* freely remitted, it is clear that a metaphor is employed. (P. 129.)

VI. The nature of the death of Christ is still further explained in the New Testament, by the manner in which it connects our justification with *faith in the blood* of Christ; and both our justification and the death of Christ with the "righteousness of God." Rom. iii, 24–26.

(a.) Thus the forgiveness of sin is not only an act of *mercy*, but an act of *justice*.

(b.) The steps of this "demonstration" of the righteousness of God are easily to be traced; for,

1. The law is by this means established in its *authority* and *perpetuity*.
2. On any other theory, there is no manifestation of God's hatred of sin, commensurate with the intense holiness of the divine nature.
3. The person who suffered the penalty of the law for us was the Son of God—in him divinity and humanity were united: and thus, as "God spared not his own Son," his justice is declared to be inflexible and inviolable.

The Socinians object that "the dignity of a person adds nothing to the estimation of his sufferings." But (1,) the common opinion of mankind in all ages is directly against this; and (2,) the testimony of Scripture is explicit on this point.

4. Though all men are brought, by the death of Christ, into a salvable state, yet none of them are brought from under the authority of the moral law.

VII. "The satisfaction made to divine justice," is a phrase which, though not found in Scripture, is yet of theological value, and deserves to be considered. (P. 137.)

(I.) There are two views of satisfaction among those who hold the doctrine of atonement, viz.:—

1. That the sufferings and death of Christ are, for the dignity of his nature, regarded as a full equivalent and adequate compensation for the punishment of the personally guilty by death.
2. That Christ made satisfaction for our sins, not because his death is to be considered a full equivalent for the remission of punishment, but because his suffering in our stead maintained the honour of the divine law, and yet gave free scope to the mercy of the lawgiver.

Both these are defective, but the first may be admitted, with some explanations.

(II.) Some explanatory observations then are necessary. (P. 138.)

1. The term *satisfaction* is taken from the Roman law, and signifies the contentment of an injured party by anything which he may choose to accept in place of the enforcement of his obligation upon

the party offending. As a *just* governor, then, God is satisfied,—contented with the atonement offered by the vicarious death of his Son.

2. The effect produced upon the mind of the lawgiver is not the satisfaction, as the Socinians would say, of a vengeful affection.

3 Nor is the death of Christ to be regarded merely as a wise and fit expedient of government; for this may imply that it was one of many possible expedients, though the best. (P. 139.)

(III.) The Antinomian perversion of these phrases needs to be refuted.

1. Antinomians connect the satisfaction of Christ with the doctrine of the imputation of his active righteousness to believers; but, 1.) We have no such office ascribed in Scripture to the active righteousness of Christ. 2.) This doctrine of imputation makes Christ's sufferings superfluous. 3.) It leaves man without law, and God without dominion. 4.) This is *not* satisfaction in any good sense: it is merely the performance of all that the law requires by one person substituted for another.

2. The terms *full satisfaction* and *equivalent*, are taken by the Antinomians in the sense of payment of debts by a surety; but we answer, He who pays a debt for another, does not render an equivalent, but gives precisely what the original obligation requires.

3. The Antinomian view makes the justification of men a matter of *right*, not of *grace*. On their view, we cannot answer the Socinian objection, that satisfaction destroys the free nature of an act of forgiveness.

VIII. It is sometimes said that we do not know the *vinculum* between the sufferings of Christ and the pardon of sin. (P. 143.) But Scripture seems to give definite information on this point, in declaring the death of Christ to be a "demonstration of the righteousness of God."

IX. Objection is made to the *justice* of the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. But,

1. It has always been considered a virtue to suffer for others under certain circumstances; and the justice of such acts has never been questioned. Still,

2. It is wrong to illustrate this doctrine by analogies between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings of persons on account of the sins of others. And,

3. The principle of vicarious punishment could not justly be adopted by *human* governments in any case whatever. But,

4. In regard to the offering of Christ,—the circumstances, (1) of the *willingness* of the substitute to submit to the penalty, and (2) his *right* thus to dispose of himself, fully clear up the question of justice.

The difficulty of reconciling the sufferings of Christ with the divine justice lies rather with the Socinians than with us. Ezek. xviii, 20, is satisfactorily explained by Grotius.

B. Proof from the *sacrifices of the law.* (Ch. xxi.)

Having adduced, from the New Testament, cogent proofs of the vicarious efficacy of Christ's death, we proceed, by the light of the argument already made good, to examine the use made of the sacrificial terms of the Old Testament; and first, the *sacrifices of the law.*

The terms taken from the Jewish sacrifices, (such as "Lamb of God," "Passover," &c.,) when used by the writers of the New Testament, would be not only *absurd*, but criminally *misleading* both to Jews and Gentiles, unless intended to teach the sacrificial character of the death of Christ. (Pp. 149, 150.)

It is necessary to establish the *expiatory nature of the Jewish sacrifices*, and their *typical character*, both of which have been questioned. To prove that

I. *The Levitical sacrifices were expiatory*, it is only necessary to show that the *eminent* sacrifices were such. (P. 151.)

The notion that these sacrifices were mere mulcts or fines is disproved

1. By the *general* appointment (Levit. xvii, 10, 11) of the blood to be an atonement for the souls. (P. 153.)
2. By *particular* instances: e. g., Levit. v, 15, 16. (P. 154.)
3. By the fact, that atonement was required by the law to be made by sin-offerings and burnt-offerings for even bodily distempers and disorders. (P. 155.)
4. By the sacrifices offered statedly for the whole congregation.
5. By the sacrifice of the passover. (P. 158.)

II. *The Levitical sacrifices were also types.* (P. 159.)

A type is a sign or example, prepared and designed by God to prefigure some future thing. St. Paul shows that the Levitical sacrifices were such.

1. In his general description of the typical character of the "church in the wilderness."
2. In his notice of the Levitical sacrifices in particular.
3. The ninth chapter of Hebrews gives direct declarations of the appointment and designation of the tabernacle service to be a shadow of good things to come.

III. *Sacrificial allusions* are employed in the New Testament to describe the nature and effect of the death of Christ, not *figuratively*, but properly.

(a.) Illustrated in various passages:—1. For he hath "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." 2. Ephes. v, 2: "Christ loved us, and gave himself for us," &c. 3. The whole argument of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews. 4. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood," &c.

(b.) Illustrated by distinction between *figurative* and *analogical* language. Quotation from Veysies' Bampton Lectures.

IV. As to the objection, that the Jewish sacrifices had no reference to the expiation of moral transgression, we observe,

1. That a distinction is to be made between sacrifices as a part of the theo-political law of the Jews, and sacrifice as a rite practised by their fathers.
2. Atonement was ordered to be made for sins committed against *any* divine commandment.
3. But if all the sin-offerings of the Levitical institute had respected legal atonement and ceremonial purification, that circumstance would not invalidate the true sacrifice of Christ.

C From the *patriarchal sacrifices.* (Ch. xxii.)

Having shown that the sacrifices of the *law* were expiatory, we proceed now to show the same of the *Ante-Mosaical* sacrifices. The proofs are,

I. The distribution of beasts into clean and unclean.

II. The prohibition of blood for food.

III. The sacrifices of the patriarchs were those of animal victims, and their use was to avert the displeasure of God from sinning men: e. g., those of Job, Noah, and Abel. But as this last has given rise to controversy, we shall consider more at large

IV. *Abel's sacrifice.* (P. 178.)

1. As to the matter of it,—it was an *animal* offering: not wool or milk, as Grotius and Le Clerc would have it, but the "firstlings of his flock."
2. This animal offering was indicative of Abel's faith, as declared by the apostle, Hebrews, chapter xi.
3. But Davison, in his "Inquiry," asserts that the divine testimony was not to the "*specific form* of Abel's oblation, but to his *actual righteousness.*"

The objections to this view of the matter are many.

(1.) It leaves out entirely all consideration of the difference between the sacrifice of Abel and that of Cain.

(2.) It passes over Abel's "faith," as evinced in this transaction.

(3.) The apostle is not speaking of the general tendency of faith to induce a holy life, but of faith as producing certain *acts;* and his reference is to Abel's faith, as expressing itself by his offering a more excellent sacrifice.

(4.) St. John's *incidental* allusion to Abel's personal righteousness does not in the least affect the statement of Paul, who treated professedly, not incidentally, the subject. And Genesis iv, 7, may be considered in two views: either, a.) to "*do well*" may mean, to do as Abel had done; or, b) the words may be considered as a declaration of the principles of God's righteous government over men.

4. If then Abel's *faith* had an immediate connexion with his sacrifice, the question occurs, to *what* had that faith respect? (P. 178.) Let us illustrate the object of the faith of the elders, from Heb. xi, and then

ascertain the object of Abel's faith also, from the *acts* in which it embodied itself. In this chapter, then,

1.) Faith is taken in the sense of *affiance* in God; and supposes some promise or revelation on his part, as the warrant for every act of affiance,—as in the cases of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c.

(2.) This revelation was antecedent to the faith; but the *acts* and the *revelation* had a natural and striking conformity to each other: e. g., Noah, &c. Our inference, then, as to Abel's sacrifice, is, that it was not eucharistic merely, but an act of faith, having respect to a previous and *appropriate* revelation. The conclusion imbodied in the words of Archbishop Magee is warranted by the argument.

(3.) But it may be asked, What evidence have we from Scripture that such an antecedent revelation was made? (P. 182.) We have

(a.) The necessary inferences from the circumstances of the transaction, which, combined with the apostle's interpretation of them, enable us sufficiently to defend this ground. The *text* which may be wanting in the *Old Testament* is often supplied by the inspired comment in the *New:* e. g., the *manna*, the *rock*, &c. . . . If it be argued that such types were not understood, as *such*, by the persons among whom they were first instituted, the answer is,—1. Either they were in some degree revealed to such as prayed for light, or we must conclude that the whole system of types was without edification to the Jews, and instructive only to us. 2. We have, in Heb. xi, in the case of Abraham, a direct proof of a distinct revelation, which is nowhere recorded as such in the Mosaic history.

(b.) Besides these inferences, however satisfactory, we *have* an account, though brief, of such revelation. (1.) The brevity of the account in the Mosaic history, is doubtless not without good reason; and (2,) brief as it is, we can easily collect, from the early part of Genesis, no unimportant information in regard to primitive theology. (3.) It is in regard to the *first promise* that we join issue with Mr. Davison; (p. 188;) believing that his view of it (*Inquiry*, &c.) contains, with some truth, much error. For, a.) It is assumed, contrary to evidence, that the Book of Genesis is a complete history of the religious opinions of the patriarchs; and he would have the promise interpreted by them so as to convey only a *general* indistinct impression of a deliverer, and that the doctrines of the divinity, incarnation, &c., of that deliverer were not in any way to be apprehended in this promise. Let us see, then, whether the promise, "interpreted by itself," must not have led the patriarchs many steps at least toward these doctrines. b.) The *divine nature* of the promised Redeemer, we are told, was a separate revelation. (P. 190.) But surely, the work assigned to him—the blessings he was to pro-

cure—the power that he was to exercise, according to the promise,—were all indications of a nature superior to humanity, and to the angels. c.) The doctrine of the *incarnation* was contained also in the promise: this restorer was to be of "the *seed of the woman.*" (P. 191.) d.) So of the doctrine of *vicarious sufferings:* "the heel of the seed of the woman was to be *bruised,*" &c. (P. 192.)

(4.) It is urged by Mr. Davison, that the faith spoken of in Hebrews xi. had for its simple object, that "God is the rewarder of such as diligently seek him." But,

(a.) Though this is supposed as the groundwork of every act of faith, yet the special acts recorded have each their special object; and,

(b.) This notion could not be at all apposite to the purpose for which this recital of the faith of the elders was addressed to the Hebrews. Two views may be given of this recital:—1. That the apostle adduced this list of worthies as examples of a steady faith in all that God had then revealed to man, and its happy consequences. 2. That he brought them up to prove that all the "elders" had faith in the Christ to come. Nor is this stronger view difficult to be made out, as we may trace in the cases of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c., a respect more or less immediate, to the leading object of all faith, the Messiah himself.

Enough has been said to prove that the sacrifice of Abel was expiatory, and that it conformed, as an act of faith, to some anterior revelation.

V. *A divine origin must be ascribed to sacrifice.*

1. The evidence of *Scripture* is of sufficient clearness to establish the divine origin of the antediluvian sacrifices; but,
2. The argument drawn from the *natural incongruity* of sacrificial rites ought not to be overlooked: which is strong even as to the *fruits* of the earth, (the offering of which cannot be shown to originate either in reason or in sentiment,) (pp. 202–204,) and still stronger as to *animal* oblations. (P. 205.)

The divine institution of expiatory sacrifice being thus carried up to the first ages, we perceive the unity of the three great dispensations of religion, the PATRIARCHAL, the LEVITICAL, and the CHRISTIAN, in the great principle, "*that without the shedding of blood there is no remission.*"

(II.) BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT. (Ch. xxiii–xxix.)

A. JUSTIFICATION. (Ch. xxiii.)

Preliminary. All natural and spiritual good must be included among the benefits derived to man from the atonement; but we shall now treat particularly of those which constitute what is called in Scripture man's SALVATION.

The fruits of the death and intercession of Christ are—

1. To render it consistent with a righteous government to *forgive sin*,
2. To call forth the *active* exercise of the love of God to man, which displays itself
   (1.) In the variety of the divine dispensations.
   (2.) In the revelation of the divine will, and declaration of God's purposes of grace.
   (3.) In the institution of the Christian ministry.
   (4.) In the influences of the Holy Spirit.

The *act of mercy* by which man is reconciled to God, is called in the Scriptures, JUSTIFICATION.

I. Statement of the *Scriptural* doctrine.

1. Justification, the remission of sin, the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of righteousness, are phrases of the same import: of which the following passages are proof:—Luke xviii, 13, 14; Acts xiii, 38, 39; Rom. iii, 25, 26; iv, 4, 8.
2. The importance of maintaining this simple view of justification,—viz., that it *is the remission of sins*,—will appear from the following considerations:—
   (1.) We are taught that pardon of sin is not an act of prerogative, done *above* law; but a judicial process, done *consistently* with law.
   (2.) That justification has respect to *particular individuals*.
   (3.) Justification being a sentence of pardon, the Antinomian notion of *eternal justification* becomes a manifest absurdity.
   (4.) We are guarded, by this view of justification, against the notion that it is *an act of God by which we are made actually just and righteous*.
   (5.) No ground is afforded for the notion that justification imports the *imputation to us of the active and passive righteousness of Christ*, so as to make us both positively and relatively righteous.

II. Doctrine of *imputation*. (Pp. 215–243.)

There are three opinions:—

(I.) The high Calvinistic, or Antinomian scheme, which is, that "Christ's *active* righteousness is imputed unto us, as ours." In answer to this we say,

1. It is nowhere stated in Scripture.
2. The notion here attached to Christ's *representing* us, is wholly gratuitous.
3. There is no weight in the argument, that "as our sins were accounted his, so his righteousness was accounted ours;" for our sins were never so accounted Christ's, as that he *did* them.
4. The doctrine involves a fiction and impossibility inconsistent with the divine attributes.
5. The acts of Christ were of a loftier character than can be supposed capable of being the acts of mere creatures.

6. Finally, and fatally, this doctrine shifts the meritorious cause of man's justification from Christ's "obedience unto death," to Christ's active obedience to the precepts of the law. Quotations are made in confirmation from Piscator and Goodwin. (Pp. 218–220.)

(II.) The opinion of Calvin himself and many of his followers, adopted also by some Arminians. It differs from the first in not separating the active from the passive righteousness of Christ; for such a distinction would have been inconsistent with Calvin's notion, that justification is simply the remission of sins. (Pp. 221–223.)

This view is adopted, with certain *modifications*, by Arminians and Wesley. (Pp. 223, 224.)

But there is a manifest difference, (pp. 225–233,) which arises from the different senses in which the word *imputation* is used: the Arminian employing it in the sense of accounting to the believer the benefit of Christ's righteousness: the Calvinist, in the sense of reckoning the righteousness of Christ as ours. A slight examination of the following passages will show that this notion has no foundation in Scripture:—Psalm xxxii, 1; Jer. xxiii, 6; Isa. xlv, 24; Rom. iii, 21, 22; 1 Cor. i, 30; 2 Cor. v, 21; Rom. v, 18, 19. In connexion with this last text, it is sometimes attempted to be shown that as Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity, so Christ's obedience is imputed unto those that are saved; but (*Goodwin on Justification*) 1.) The Scripture nowhere affirms either the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, or of the righteousness of Christ to those that believe. 2.) To *impute* sin, in Scripture phrase, is to charge the guilt of sin upon a man, with a purpose to punish him for it. And 3.) As to the *imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity*,—if by it is meant simply that the guilt of Adam's sin is charged upon his whole posterity, let it pass; but if the meaning be that all Adam's posterity are made, by this imputation, *formally* sinners, then the Scriptures do not justify it.

(III.) The imputation of *faith* for righteousness. (P. 234.)

(a.) *Proof of* this doctrine.

1. It is expressly taught in Scripture, Romans iv, 3–24, etc.; nor is *faith* used in these passages by metonymy for the object of faith, that is, the righteousness of Christ.

2. The testimony of the church to this doctrine has been uniform from the earliest ages—Tertullian, Origen, Justin Martyr, &c. —down to the sixteenth century. (Pp. 236–239.)

(b.) *Explanation* of the terms of the proposition, that "faith is imputed for righteousness." (Pp. 239–242.)

(1.) *Righteousness.* To be accounted *righteous*, is, in the style of the apostle Paul, to be *justified*, where there has been personal guilt.

(2.) *Faith* It is not faith generally considered, that is imputed to us for righteousness, but faith (trust) in an atonement offered by another in our behalf.

(3.) *Imputation.* The non-imputation of sin to a sinner is expressly called, "the imputation of righteousness without works;" the imputation of righteousness is, then, the non-punishment or pardon of sin; and by imputing faith for righteousness, the apostle means precisely the same thing.

(c.) The *objections* to the doctrine of the imputation of faith for righteousness admit of easy answer.

(1.) The Papists err in taking the term justification to signify the making men morally just.

(2.) A second objection is, that if believing is imputed for righteousness, then justification is by works, or by somewhat in ourselves. In this objection, the term *works* is used in an equivocal sense.

(3.) A third objection is, that this doctrine gives occasion to boasting. But 1.) This objection lies with equal strength against the doctrine of imputed righteousness. 2.) The faith itself is the gift of God. 3.) The blessings which follow faith are given in respect to the death of Christ. 4.) Paul says that boasting is excluded by the law of faith.

III. *The nature of justifying faith;* and its connexion with justification (Pp. 243–253.)

1. Faith is, 1) assent; 2) confidence; and this faith is the *condition* to which the promise of God annexes justification.
2. Justification by faith alone is clearly the doctrine of Scripture. Some suppose this doctrine to be a peculiarity of Calvinism; but it has been maintained by various Arminian writers, and by none with more earnestness and vigour than by Mr. Wesley. (Pp. 246–248.)
3. The general objection to this doctrine is, that it is unfavourable to morality. The proper answer to this *old* objection is, that although we are justified by faith *alone*, the faith by which we are justified is not alone in the heart which exercises it: "faith is *sola*, yet not *solitaria*." Some colour is given to this objection by the Calvinistic view of final perseverance, which we disavow.
4. Various errors have arisen from unnecessary attempts to guard this doctrine. (P. 250.)

(1.) The Romish Church confounds justification and sanctification.

(2.) Another opinion is, that justifying faith includes works of evangelical obedience.

(a.) The Scriptures put a plain distinction between faith and works

(b.) It is not probable that Christ and his apostles meant more by this word than its fixed and usual import.

(3.) A third notion,—that faith apprehends the merits of Christ, to make up for the deficiency of our imperfect obedience,—is sufficiently refuted by the fact, that no intimation of it is given in Scripture.

(4.) The last error referred to is that which represents faith as, *per se*, the necessary root of obedience. Perhaps those who use this language do not generally intend to say all that it conveys.

IV. A few theories on the subject of justification remain to be stated and examined. (Pp. 253–266.)

(1.) The doctrine held by Bishop Taylor, Archbishop Tillotson, and others, that "regeneration is necessary to justification," is an error whose source appears to be two-fold: (a) from a loose notion of the Scriptural doctrine of regeneration; and (b) from confounding the change which repentance implies, with regeneration itself.

(2.) Another theory is that propounded by Bishop Bull, in his *Harmonia Apostolica*, which has taken deep root in the English Church: the doctrine being, that justification is by *works*;—those works being such as proceed from faith, are done by the assistance of the Spirit, and are not meritorious. Instead of reconciling St. James to St. Paul, Bishop Bull takes the unusual course of reconciling St. Paul to St. James: but

(a.) St. Paul treats the doctrine of justification *professedly*; St. James *incidentally*.

(b.) The two apostles are not addressing themselves to persons in the same circumstances, and hence do not engage in the same argument.

(c.) St. Paul and St. James do not use the term justification in the same sense. Lastly, the two apostles agree with each other upon the subject of faith and works.

(3.) A third theory is maintained by some of the leading divines of the English Church: which is, that men are justified by faith only, but that faith is mere assent to the truth of the gospel. The error of this scheme consists in the partial view which is taken of the nature of justifying faith.

(4.) A fourth theory defers justification to the last day. In answer to this, we say,

a.) It is *not* essential to pardon, that all its consequences should be *immediately* removed.

b.) Acts of private and personal judgment are in no sense contrary to a *general* judgment.

c.) Justification *now*, and at the last day, are not the same:—a.) They are not the same act. b.) They do not proceed upon the same principle.

(5.) The last theory is that of collective justification, proposed by Dr. Taylor, of Norwich: which only needs to be stated, not refuted.

B. CONCOMITANTS OF JUSTIFICATION. (Ch. xxiv.)

I. *Regeneration* is a change wrought in man by the Holy Spirit, by which

the dominion of sin over him is broken, so that with free choice of will he serves God.

1. Repentance *is* not regeneration, but precedes it.
2. Regeneration is not justification, but always accompanies it. Which may be proved
   (1.) From the nature of justification itself.
   (2.) From Scripture: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

II. *Adoption* is that *act* by which we who were enemies are made the sons of God and heirs of his eternal glory; and is that *state* to which belongs freedom from a servile spirit, &c. . . . with the Spirit of adoption, or the witness of the Spirit, by which means only we can know that the privileges of adoption are ours. The doctrine of the *witness of the Spirit* is clearly taught in the Epistles: it is sometimes called *assurance*, but as this phrase has been abused, it should perhaps be cautiously employed.

(1.) There are four opinions on the subject of this testimony of the Spirit.

1. That it is twofold:—1.) A *direct* testimony of the Spirit. 2.) An *in direct* testimony, arising from the work of the Spirit in the heart.
2. That it is twofold, also:—1.) The fruits of the Spirit in the heart of the believer. 2.) The consciousness, on the part of the believer, of possessing faith.
3. That there is but one witness, the Holy Spirit, acting concurrently with our own spirits.
4. That there is a direct witness, which is the special privilege of a few favoured persons.

(2.) Observations on these four opinions. (Pp. 273–280.)

1. All sober divines allow that Christians may attain comfortable persuasions of the divine favour.
2. By those who admit justification, it must be admitted that either this act of mercy must be kept secret from man, or there must be some means of his knowing it: and if the former, there can be no comfortable persuasion, &c.; but, on the contrary, Scripture declares that the justified "rejoice."
3. If the Christian, then, may know that he is forgiven, how is this knowledge to be attained? The twofold testimony of the Spirit and heart declares it. Romans viii, 16.
4. But does the Holy Spirit give his testimony *directly* to the mind, or mediately by our own spirits, as Bishop Bull and Mr. Scott affirm? To the latter doctrine we object,—that the witness is still that of our own spirit; and that but *one* witness is allowed, while St. Paul speaks of *two*.
5. Neither the consciousness of genuine *repentance*, nor that of *faith*, is consciousness of adoption; and if nothing more be afforded, the *evidence* of forgiveness is only that of mere *inference*.
6. "But are not the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, &c., sufficient

proof of our adoption, without a more direct testimony?" Nay: these very fruits (at least love, joy, and peace, which cannot be separated from the others) presuppose not only a pardon, but a *clear persuasion* of that pardon.

The witness of the Spirit is direct, then, and not mediate; nor is this a new doctrine, as may be easily shown by quotations from *Luther*, *Hooper*, *Andrew*, *Usher*, Hooker, &c. The *second* testimony is that of our own spirits, not to the fact of our adoption *directly*, but to the fact that we have, in truth, received the Spirit of adoption, and that we are under no delusive impressions

(C.)—ON THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

(Ch. xxv–xxviii.)

The Calvinistic controversy forms a clear case of appeal to the Scriptures, by whose light we propose to examine it. In regard to the extent of the atonement,

I. Our proposition is, *that Jesus Christ did so die for all men, as to make salvation attainable by all men*, (pp. 285–288,) and we prove it by

1. Passages which expressly declare the doctrine.
   (a.) Those which say that Christ died "*for* all men," and speak of his death as an atonement for the sins of the whole world.
   (b.) Those which attribute an equal extent to the death of Christ, as to the effects of the fall.
2. Passages which necessarily imply the doctrine, viz.:—
   (a.) Those which declare that Christ died, not only for those that are saved, but for those who do or may perish.
   (b.) Those which make it the duty of men to believe the gospel; and place them under guilt, and the penalty of death, for rejecting it.
   (c.) Those in which men's failure to obtain salvation is placed to the account of their own opposing wills, and made wholly their own fault.

II. We have to consider *what our opponents have to urge against these plain statements of Scripture.* In the first place, they have *no* text whatever to adduce which declares that Christ *did not* die for the salvation of all, as literally as those which declare that he *did* so die. They merely attempt to explain away the force of the passages we have adduced. Thus—

1. To our first class of texts they object that the terms, "*all men*," and "*the world*," are sometimes used in Scripture in a limited sense. This may be granted; but the true question yet remains, whether in the above-cited passages they can be understood except in the largest sense. We deny this,
   (1.) Because the *universal sense* of the terms used is confirmed either by the context of the passages in which they occur, or by other Scriptures.

(2.) Nor can the phrases "*the world*," &c., be paraphrased as "the world of the elect;" for

a.) The *elect* are in Scripture *distinguished* from the *world*.

b.) The common division of mankind in the New Testament, is into only two parts, viz., the disciples of Christ, and "the world."

c.) When the redemption is spoken of, it often includes both those who had been chosen out of the world, and those who remained still of the world.

d.) In the general commission, "Go ye into *all* the world," the expression "into" has its fullest latitude of meaning.

e.) This restrictive interpretation gives gross absurdity to several passages of Scripture. John iii, 16–18. (Pp. 291, 292.)

2. To our second class of texts—those which *imply* the unrestricted extent of Christ's death—certain qualifying answers are given. (Pp. 293–306.) Thus—

(1.) As to those which speak of Christ having *died for them that perish*.

a.) "Destroy not him," &c. Rom. xiv, 15. Poole's paraphrase on this text, "for whom, in the judgment of charity, we may suppose Christ died," completely counteracts the argument of the apostle. Scott, also, by explaining this as a "caution against doing anything which has a *tendency* to destroy," takes away, completely, the motive on which the admonition is grounded.

b.) "Denying the Lord that bought them," &c. 2 Peter ii, 1. The interpretations of Scott and Poole are evasions of the force of the text, which is, that their offence was aggravated by the fact of Christ having bought them.

c.) The case of the apostates, Heb. vi, 4–8, and x, 26–31. Calvinists deny that the apostates referred to were ever true believers, or capable of becoming such. But,

1. Paul did not hold out that to the Hebrews as a terror which he knew to be impossible.
2. If these apostates never were believers, they could not be admonitory examples.
3. To represent their case as a "falling away"—if it had never been hopeful—was an absurdity of which Paul would not be guilty.
4. But what the apostle affirms of their previous state, clearly shows that it had been a state of salvation.
5. The Calvinistic interpretations are *below* the force of the terms employed; and they are *above* the character of reprobates.

(2.) As to those which make it the duty of men to believe the gospel, and threaten them with punishment for not believing,—the Calvinistic reply is, that it is the duty of all men to believe the gospel, whether they are interested in the death of Christ or not; and that they are guilty and deserving of punishment for not believing. (P. 301.) But if Christ died not for all such persons, we think it plain

that it cannot be their duty to believe the gospel; and to settle this point, we must determine what is meant by believing the gospel. The faith which the gospel requires of all, is, "trust in our Lord Jesus Christ:" *true* faith, then, and not merely assent, is implied in believing the gospel. But of those for whom Christ *did not die*, such faith cannot be required; for,

1. It is impossible.
2. God could not command what he never intended.
3. What *all* are bound to believe in, is *true*.

(3.) As to the last class of texts, viz., those which impute the blame and fault of their non-salvation to men themselves, the common reply is, that if men *willed* to come to Christ, they would have life; (p. 303;) but,

1. Put the question to the non-elect; and either it is possible for them to come to Christ, or it is not: if the former, then they may come to Christ *without* receiving salvation; if the latter, then the bar to their salvation is not in themselves.
2. The argument from this class of texts is not exhausted; for they *expressly exclude* God from all participation in the destruction of sinners. "God willeth all men to be saved," &c. Texts which gave rise to the ancient notion of a secret and revealed will of God: a subterfuge to which perhaps few Calvinists in the present day are disposed to resort.

EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT—CONTINUED. (Ch. XXVI.)

As the Calvinists have no *direct* texts in support of their doctrine, they resort mainly to implication and inference. The words *election*, *calling*, and *foreknowledge*, are much relied upon in their arguments. We shall now proceed to examine the Scriptural meaning of them.

I. ELECTION. Three kinds of election are mentioned in Scripture.

(I.) That of individuals to perform some *special* service: e. g., Cyrus was elected to rebuild the temple; Paul, to be the apostle of the Gentiles.

(II.) *Collective* election. (Pp. 308–337.)

(a.) Explanation of its use in Scripture.

1. Of the *Jews*, as the chosen people of God. (P. 308.)
2. Of the calling of believers in all nations to be in reality what the Jews had been typically (Pp. 308–310.)

(b.) Inquiry as to its effect upon the extent of the atonement.

1. With respect to the ancient election of *the Jewish* church.
   (1.) *That* election did not secure the salvation of every Jew individually.
   (2.) *Sufficient* means of salvation were left to the non-elect Gentiles.
   (3.) Nay, the election of the Jews was intended for the benefit of the Gentiles—to restrain idolatry and diffuse spiritual truth.

2. With respect to the election of the *Christian* Church.
   (1.) *That* election does not infallibly secure the salvation of the Christian.
   (2.) It concludes nothing against the salvability of those who are not in the church.
   (3.) Christians are thus elected, not in consequence of, or in order to, the exclusion of others; but for the benefit of others as well as themselves.

(c.) *Collective* election is frequently confounded with *personal* election, by Calvinistic commentators, especially in their expositions of

PAUL'S DISCOURSE. Romans ix–xi. (Pp. 312–337.)

1 Which we shall examine, *first*, to determine whether *personal* or *collective* election be the subject of it. (Pp. 312–325.)
   (1.) The exclusion of the Jew is the first topic: the righteousness of which exclusion Paul vindicates against the objections raised in the minds of the Jews.
      a.) By showing that God had limited the covenant to a part of the descendants of Abraham: (1.) In the case of the descendants of Jacob himself. (2.) From Jacob he ascends to Abraham, v. 7. (3.) The instance of Isaac's children, v. 10–13. On the passage, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," which has often been perverted, we remark: 1. The apostle is here speaking of "the seed," intended in the promise. 2. This is proved by Gen. xxv, 23: "Two *nations* are in thy womb," etc. 3. Instances of *individual* reprobation would have been impertinent to the apostle's purpose.
      b.) By asking the objecting Jews to say whether in these instances there was a failure of God's covenant with Abraham, (p. 314,) he expressly denies any unrighteousness in them. But those who would interpret these passages as referring to personal unconditional election and reprobation, are bound to show how they could be *righteous*. (P. 315.)
      c.) By the statement, "So then, it is not of him that willeth," etc.—containing a beautiful allusion to the case of Isaac and Esau.
   (2.) The next point of the discourse is, to show that God exercises the prerogative of making *some notorious sinners the special objects of his displeasure*. (P. 316.) Here again the example is taken from the Jewish Scriptures; but observe, *it is not Ishmael* or *Esau*, but Pharaoh, a Gentile, who was a most appropriate example to illustrate the case of the body of the unbelieving Jews, who were, when the apostle wrote, under the sentence of a terrible excision.
   (3.) In verse nineteen the Jew is again introduced as an objector: "Why doth he yet find fault?" &c. (P. 317.)
      (a.) This objection, and the apostle's reply, are usually interpreted

as inculcating upon nations visited with penal inflictions, the impropriety of debating the case with God. This interpretation is hardly satisfactory; for,

1. What end is answered by teaching a hopeless people not to "reply against God?"
2. If this be the meaning, the apostle's allusion to the parable of the prophet, Jer., chap. xviii, is inappropriate; as that parable supposes the time of trial, as to such nations, to be not yet past.
3. "Dishonour" is not destruction; no potter makes a vessel on purpose to destroy it. (P. 318.)
4. This interpretation supposes that the body of the Jewish nation had arrived already at a state of dereliction, which is not the case.

(b.) A different view of this part of Paul's discourse is presented. (P. 319.) The objection of the Jew goes upon the ground of predestination, which is refuted, not conceded, by the apostle, as follows:—

1. The "vessel" was not made "unto dishonour," until the clay had been "marred:" i. e., the Jews were not dishonoured until they had failed to conform with the design of God.
2. Jeremiah, interpreting the parable, represents the "dishonoured" as within the reach of the divine favour upon repentance.
3. What follows verse twenty-two, serves still further to silence the objector. The temporal punishment of the Jews in Judea is alluded to by the apostle, as a proof both of sovereignty and justice; but that punishment does not preclude the salvability of the race. (P. 321.)

(c.) The metaphor of "vessels" is still employed; but by "vessels of dishonour," and "vessels of wrath," the apostle means vessels in *different conditions*. The *first*, being part of the prophecy which signified the dishonoured state in which the Jews, for *punishment* and *correction*, were placed under captivity in Babylon: the *second*, with reference to the prophecy in nineteenth Jeremiah, had relation to the coming destruction of the temple, city, and polity of the Jews, by the Romans. There could be no complaint of injustice or unrighteousness, in regard to this destruction; for,

1. It was brought upon themselves by their own sins. (P. 324.)
2. Moreover, these vessels (adapted to destruction by their own sins) were endured with much long-suffering.

The tenth and eleventh chapters contain nothing but what refers to the *collective rejection* of the Jewish nation, and the *collective election* of all believing Jews and Gentiles into the visible Church of God. The discourse, then can only be interpreted of collective election; and we now proceed,

II. To examine it *secondly*, with reference to the question of *unconditional* election, that is, an election of persons to eternal life without respect to their faith or obedience. (Pp. 326–337.) Such election finds no place in this chapter, though there are several instances of unconditional election; but we deny that the spiritual blessings of piety spring necessarily from it, or that unbelief and ruin follow in like manner non-election. The discourse abundantly refutes such opinions. (P. 327.)

(1.) The descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob were elected, but true faith and salvation did not follow as infallible consequents. So were the Gentiles at length elected, but obedience and salvation did not necessarily follow.

(2.) The cases of *non-election* or *rejection* were not infallibly followed by unbelief, disobedience, and punishment: e. g., the Ishmaelites —the Edomites—the rejected Jews in the apostolic age. (Pp. 328, 329.)

(3.) The only argument of any weight, for the ground that *individuals* are intended in this discourse, is, that as none are acknowledged to be the true church but true believers, therefore individual election to eternal life must necessarily be included in the notion of collective election; and that true believers only, under both the old and new dispensations, constituted the "*election*"—the "*remnant according to the election of grace.*" (P. 330.) In this argument there is much error.

1. It is a mere assumption, that the spiritual Israelites, in opposition to Israelites by birth, are anywhere called the "election," or the "remnant," &c.
2. It is not true, that under the old dispensation the election of which the apostle speaks was confined to the spiritual seed of Abraham: e. g., case of Esau and Jacob and their descendants.
3. This notion is often grounded on a mistaken view of verses 6–9 in this chapter: the view, namely, that in this passage Paul distinguishes between the spiritual Israelites and those of natural descent; while the fact is, that he distinguishes between the descendants of Abraham in *a certain line*, and his other descendants.
4. Though we grant that the election of bodies of men to church privileges involves the election of individuals into the true church,—still this last, as Scripture plainly testifies, is *not* unconditional, as the former is, but depends upon their repentance and faith.

We have thus shown that the apostle treats of unconditional *collective* election, but not of unconditional individual election.

(III.) The *third* kind of election is *personal* election, or the choice of individuals to be the heirs of eternal life. (P. 337.)

a.) It is not denied that true believers are styled in Scripture the "elect of God;" but the question arises, What is the import of that act of grace which is termed "an election?" We find it explained in two clear passages of Scripture. To be elected, is to be separated from "the world," and to be "sanctified by the Spirit, and by the blood of Christ;" hence, election is not only an act done in *time*, but subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation.

b.) The Calvinistic doctrine, that God hath from eternity chosen unto salvation a set number of men *unto* faith and final salvation, presents a different aspect, and requires an appeal to the Word of God. It has two parts: 1. The choosing of a *determinate number of men*, and, 2. That this election is *unconditional*. (P. 338.)

A. As to the *choosing of a determinate number of men*, it is allowed by Calvinists that they have no express Scriptural evidence for this tenet. And

(1.) As to God's *eternal* purpose to elect, we know nothing except from revelation; and that declares, (a) that he willeth *all* men to be saved: (b) that Christ died for *all* men, in order to the salvation of all: and (c) the decree of God is, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned;" and if God be unchangeable, this must have been his decree from all eternity: (d) if the fault of men's destruction lies in *themselves*—as we have proved—then the number of the elect is capable of *increase* and *diminution*.

2.) This doctrine *necessarily* carries with it that of the *unconditional reprobation* of all mankind except the elect, which cannot be reconciled, (a) with the *love* of God; (b) with the *wisdom* of God; (c) with the *grace* of God; (d) with the *compassion* of God; (e) with the *justice* of God; (f) with the *sincerity* of God; (g) with the Scriptural doctrine that *God is no respecter of persons;* (h) with the Scriptural doctrine of *the eternal salvation of infants;* (i) and, finally, with the proper end of *punitive justice*.

B. We consider now the second branch of this doctrine, viz., that personal election is *unconditional*. (P. 345.)

(1.) According to this doctrine, the Church of God is constituted on the sole principle of the divine purpose, not upon the basis of faith and obedience, which manifestly contradicts the Word of God.

(2.) This doctrine of *election without respect to faith* contradicts the history of the commencement and first constitution of the Church of Christ.

(3.) There is no such doctrine in Scripture as the election of individuals *unto* faith; and it is inconsistent with several passages which speak expressly of personal election: e. g., John xv, 19; 1 Peter i, 2; 2 Thess. ii, 13, 14. (Pp. 347, 348.)

(4.) There is another class of texts, referring to believers, not individually, but as a body forming the Church of Christ, which texts, containing the *word* election, are ingeniously or perversely applied by Calvinists to the support of their doctrine, when in fact they do not contain it. Such is Eph. i, 4–6. Now in regard to this text, it might be shown, (a) that if personal election *were* contained in it, the choice spoken of is not of men merely, but of *believing* men; but (b) it does not contain the doctrine of personal election, but that of the eternal purpose of God to constitute his visible church no longer upon the ground of descent from Abraham, but on that of *faith in Christ*.

(5.) Finally, the Calvinistic doctrine has no stronger passage to lean upon. (P. 351.) We conclude by asking, if this doctrine be true, (a.) Why are we commanded "to make our *election* sure?" (b.) Where does Scripture tell us of *elect unbelievers?* (c.) And how can the Spirit of truth convince such of sin and danger when they are, *in fact*, in no danger?

II. Having thus considered election, we come now to examine those texts which speak of the *calling* and *predestination* of believers.

(I.) The words "*call*" and "calling" occur frequently in the New Testament. The parable in Matthew xxii, 1–14, seems to have given rise to many of these; and a clear interpretation of it will explain the use of the phrase in most other passages.

a.) Three classes of persons are *called* in the parable. (1.) The disobedient persons who made light of the call. (2.) Those embraced in the class of "destitute of the wedding garment." (3.) The approved guests.

b.) As to the call itself. (1.) The three classes are on an equality. (2.) No irresistible influence is employed. (3.) They are called into a company, or society, before which the banquet is spread.

These views explain the passages in which the term is used in the epistles: in none of them is the exclusive calling of any set number of men contained.

(II.) The Synod of Dort attempt (p. 355) to *reason* the doctrine from Romans viii, 30. But this passage says nothing of a "*set and determinate number of men.*" It treats indeed of the privileges and hopes of believers, but not as secured to them by any such decree as the Synod of Dort advocates; for,

(1.) The matter would have been out of place in St. Paul's lofty conclusion of his high argument on justification by faith.

(2.) The context relieves the text of the *appearance* of favouring the doctrine.

(3.) The apostle does indeed speak of the *foreknowledge* of believers,

taken distributively and personally, to church privileges; but this strengthens our argument against the use of the passage made by the Synod of Dort; for 1. Foreknowledge may be simple approval, as in Romans xi, 2; and 2. If it be taken in this passage in the sense of simple prescience, it will come to the same issue; for believers, if foreknown at all, in any other sense than *all* men are foreknown, must have been foreknown *as believers*.

(4.) As to the *predestination* spoken of in the text, the way is now clear: the *foreknown believers* were predestinated, called, justified, and glorified.

EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE SUPPOSED TO LIMIT THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION. (Ch. xxvii.)

1. John vi, 37: "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." The Calvinistic view of this text is, that a certain number were "*given*" to Christ; and as none others can *come* to him, the doctrine of distinguishing grace is established.

(1.) Our first objection to this view is, that Christ placed the reason of the Jews' not coming, in *themselves*. John v, 38, 40, 44, 46.

(2.) The phrase, "*to be given*" by the Father to Christ, is abundantly explained by the context.

2. Matthew xx, 15, 16. The Calvinistic view here is, that God has a right, on the principle of pure sovereignty, to afford grace to some, and to leave others to perish in their sins. The fact that this passage is the conclusion of the parable of the vineyard, is sufficient refutation of the interpretation.

3. 2 Timothy ii, 19. This text bears no friendly aspect toward Calvinism.

4. John x, 26: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." It is a sufficient reply to the Calvinistic view of this text, to state that men are called "the sheep of Christ" in regard to their *qualities* and *acts*, and not with reference to any supposed transaction between the Father and Christ.

5. John xiii, 18. The term "*know*" in this text is evidently used in the sense of discriminating character.

6. John xv, 16. The word "*chosen*" in this text is gratuitously interpreted (by Calvinists) as relating to an *eternal* election; but Christ had "chosen them *out of the world*," which must have been done in *time*.

7. 2 Timothy i, 9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling," &c. No *personal* election spoken of here. The parallel passage, Eph. iii, 4-6, shows that the apostle was speaking of the divine purpose to form the church out of both Jews and Gentiles.

8. Acts xiii, 48: "And as many as were *ordained* to eternal life believed."
   (1.) If the Gentiles, who believed, only did so because they were "ordained" so to do, then the Jews, who believed not, were not guilty, as it is affirmed, of PUTTING THE WORD AWAY from them.
   (2.) The Calvinistic view carries with it the notion that *all* the elect Gentiles at Antioch believed *at once*, and that no more remained to be converted.
   (3.) Some Calvinists render the words "*determined*," or "ordered," for eternal life.
   (4.) In no place in the New Testament where the same word occurs, is it ever employed to convey the meaning of destiny, or predestination.

9. Luke x, 20. Our Calvinistic friends forget, in interpreting this text, that names may be "blotted out of the book of life."

10. Prov. xvi, 4. The true meaning is, that God renders even those who have made themselves wicked, the means of glorifying his justice in their punishment.

11. John xii, 37–40. Quotation from Isaiah. In examining this passage, we find,
   (1.) That it does not affirm that the eyes of the Jew should be blinded by a divine agency, as Mr. Scott and the Calvinists assume. In every view of the passage, the responsible agent is "THIS PEOPLE"—the perverse and obstinate Jews themselves.
   (2.) A simple prophecy is not a declaration of *purpose* at all; but the declaration of a future event.
   (3.) Even admitting the Calvinistic view of this passage, it would afford no proof of *general* election and reprobation, since it has application to the unbelieving part of the Jews only.

12. Jude 4. These certain men had been *foretold* in the Scriptures, or their punishment predicted. There is nothing here of eternal purpose.

13. 1 Cor. iv, 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another?" A favourite argument with Calvinists is founded on this text; and a dilemma raised on the supposition of gospel offers being made to two men, why one accepts and the other rejects? They answer that election *alone* solves the question. But,
   (1.) Put the question as to *one* man, at two different periods;—and election will not solve this difficulty: of course, then, it will not solve the other.
   (2.) The question of the apostle has reference to *gifts* and *endowments*, not to a difference in religious state.
   (3.) Following out their view, the doctrine would follow, that sufficiency of grace is denied to the wicked,—which would remove all their responsibility.

14. Acts xviii, 9, 10: " . . . for I have much people in this city." This may mean, either that there were many devout people in the city, or that there would be many subsequently converted there.

THEORIES WHICH LIMIT THE EXTENT OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST (Ch. xxviii.)

We shall notice in this chapter the doctrines of predestination, etc.

I *As stated by Calvin himself, and by Calvinistic theologians and churches.* (Pp. 381–410.)

(I.) *Calvin.*

1. Statement of his opinions, from the " Institutes." (Pp. 381, 382.)
2. His answers to objections shown to be weak and futile, (pp. 383, 384,) e. g.,
   a.) The objection that the system is *unjust:* which he answers by asserting that it is the will of God: thus making *four* evasions—1, 2, 3, 4.
   b.) The objection that if corruption is the *cause* of man's destruction, the corruption itself was an effect of the divine decree: which he answers by referring again to the sovereign will of God. (P. 384.)
3. His attempts to reconcile his doctrine with *man's demerit*, and to relieve it of the charge of making *God the author of sin*, shown to be feeble and contradictory. (Pp. 385–387.)
4. His system not reducable to sublapsarianism. (P. 388.)
5. His tenets shown to be in opposition to the doctrines of the first ages. (P. 389.)
6. Their history from the time of Augustine to Calvin. (P. 390.)

(II.) *Calvinistic theologians and churches.*

1. Three leading theories prevalent among the reformed churches *prior to* the Synod of Dort.
   a.) *Supralapsarian.* (1.) *Decree:* to save certain men by grace, and to condemn others by justice. (2.) *Means:* creation of Adam, and ordination of sin. (3.) *Operation:* irresistible grace, producing faith and final salvation. (4.) *Result:* that reprobates have no grace, and no capacity of believing and of being saved. (Pp 391, 392.)
   b.) Also *supralapsarian*, but differing somewhat from (a.), viz., that it does not lay down the creation or the fall as a mediate cause, foreordained of God for the execution of the decree of reprobation; but yet Arminius shows that, according to this view, the fall is a *necessary means* for its exercise, and thus God is made the author of sin. (Pp. 392, 393.)
   c.) *Sublapsarian.* In which man, as the objer of predestination, is considered as fallen.

(1.) Statement of the doctrine. Its basis is, that the whole human race are liable to eternal death in consequence of Adam's transgression.

(2.) Refutation. "The wages of sin is death," but "sin is the transgression of the law."

1. If the race be contemplated as contained *seminally* in Adam, then the whole race would have perished in Adam, without the vouchsafement of mercy to any.
2. If contemplated as to have not only a potential but a real existence, then the doctrine is, that every man of the race is absolutely liable to eternal death for the sin of Adam, to which he was not a consenting party.
3. If the foreknowledge of actual transgression be contemplated by the decree, then the actual sins of men are either evitable or necessary: if the former, then reprobates may be saved; if the latter, none are responsible.
4. It is alleged that Paul represents all men under condemnation to eternal death in consequence of their connexion with the first Adam; but, (p. 397,)
   a.) In the gospel "*this* is the condemnation, that men love darkness rather than light." Hence the previous state of condemnation was not unalterable.
   b.) In Scripture, final condemnation is always placed upon the ground of *actual sin*.
   c.) The true sense of the apostle in Rom. v, is to be obtained from a careful examination of the entire argument. He is not representing, as Calvinists have it, the condition in which the human race *would* have been if Christ had not interposed, but its *actual* condition, *both* in consequence of the fall of man and the intervention of Christ. (Pp. 398–400.)

2. *Decisions of the Synod of Dort:* from Scott's translation of the "Judgment of the Synod," &c., read in the great church at Dort, in 1619. By extracts from Acts i, 1, 4–6, 10, and 15, it is clear that Dr. Heylin gave a true summary of the eighteen articles on predestination, in the following words:—"That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation a very small number of men, without any regard to their faith and obedience whatsoever; and excluded from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them by the same decree to eternal damnation, without any regard to their infidelity and impenitency." (Pp. 401–407.)
3. *The Church of Scotland* expresses its doctrine on these topics in the answers to the 12th and 13th questions of its large catechism; in which there appears a strict conformity to the doctrines of Calvin.
4. *The Church of the Vaudois*, in Piedmont, by the Confession of A. D 1120, establish the doctrine that Christ died for the salvation of the

whole world; but in the seventeenth century pastors were introduced from Geneva, and the Confession of 1655 embraces the doctrine and almost the very words of Calvin on this point.

5. *The French Churches*, in their Confession of 1558, declare Calvinistic sentiments, but the expressions are guarded and careful.
6. *The Westminster Confession* gives the sentiments of the English Presbyterian Churches, and of the Church of Scotland. In chapter iii, the doctrine of predestination is advanced in conformity with the most unmitigated parts of Calvin's Institutes.

II. *As held in certain modifications of the Calvinistic scheme.* (Pp. 410–422.)

(I.) *Baxterianism:* advanced by Richard Baxter, in his treatise of *Universal Redemption*, and in his *Methodus Theologiæ;* but derived from the writings of Camero, and defended by Amyraut and others.

1. It differs from High Calvinism, as to the doctrine of satisfaction: as the system explicitly asserts that Christ made satisfaction by his death equally for the sins of every man. Baxter draws many "*absurd consequents* from the doctrine which denieth universal satisfaction." (Pp. 413–416.)
2. But from an examination of his entire scheme, it amounts only to this, —that although a *conditional satisfaction* has been purchased by Christ for all men, yet Christ has *not* purchased for all men the power of performing the required condition of salvation. Baxter gives to the elect irresistible effectual grace; but to others *sufficient grace*, which is called by himself, aptly enough, "sufficient *ineffectual* grace." He admits that all men may have grace to bring them *nearer* Christ; but coming nearer to Christ, and nearer to saving faith, are with him quite distinct. His concern seems to be, to show, not how the non-elect might be saved, but how they might with some plausibility be damned. Quotations from Curcellœus, Dr. Womack, and Maclaine, are in point. (Pp. 417–421.)

(II.) *Dr. Williams's* scheme is in substance the same as the theory of supralapsarian reprobation. In all other mitigated schemes, the "sufficiency of grace" is understood in Baxter's sense. The labour of all these theories is to find out some pretext for punishing those that perish, independent of the Scriptural reason, the rejection of a mercy free for all.

III. *As to their origin.* They seem to have arisen, not from a careful examination of Scripture, but from metaphysical subtleties, for by these they have at all times been chiefly supported.

(I.) *Eternal decrees.*

1. This term is nowhere employed in Scripture: its signification, (if it be

used at all,) must be controlled by Scripture. The decrees of God can only Scripturally signify the determination of his will in his government of the world he has made.

2. These decrees are, in Scripture, referred to two classes: (1) a determination *to do* certain things; and (2) a determination to permit certain things to be done by free and accountable creatures. This last does not involve the consequence of making God the author of sin.

3. That many of the divine decrees are *conditional* we have the testimony of Scripture, which abounds with examples of decrees to which conditions are annexed. We have also instances, as in the case of Eli, of the revocation of the divine decrees. (Pp. 425–428.)

(II.) *The prescience of God.*

1. The Calvinistic *popular* argument is, that as the final condition of every man is foreseen, it must be certain, and therefore inevitable and necessary. The answer is, that certainty and necessity are two perfectly distinct predicaments,—as certainty exists in the mind foreseeing, but necessity qualifies the action foreseen.

2. The *scholastic* argument.

(a.) The schoolmen distinguish between (1.) *Scientia indefinita*, the knowledge of possible things, and (2.) *Scientia visionis*, the knowledge which God has of all real existences; to which the antipredestinarians added (3.) *Scientia media*, to express God's knowledge of the actions of free agents, and the divine acts consequent upon them.

(b.) Absolute predestination is identified with *scientia visionis* by the Calvinists: illustrated by an extract from *Hill's Lectures*. (P. 431.)

The sophistry of Dr. Hill's statement lies in this, that the determination of the divine will to produce the universe is made to include a determination "to produce the whole series of beings and events that were then future:" while among the "beings" to be produced were some endowed with free will. If this be denied, then man is not accountable for his personal offences: if allowed, then his (say) sinful acts cannot have been determined in the same manner by the divine will, as the production of the universe and the beings which composed it.

(III.) *The human will.* (P. 435.)

1. Calvinists find it necessary to the consistency of their theory that the *volitions*, as well as the *acts*, of man should be placed in bondage; and their doctrine fairly stated is, that the will is determined to one class of objects, no other being possible. The Scriptural doctrine is, that, by the grace of God, man—who without that grace would be *morally* incapable of choosing anything but evil—is endowed with the power of choosing good. (P. 436.)

2. More moderate Calvinists contend that transgressors are responsible for their evil acts, because they are done willingly, although their will could not but choose them. We reply, that this is only the case where the time of trial is past, as in devils and apostates; and then only because these are personally guilty of having vitiated their own wills: but the case is different as to probationers; for,
   (1.) It is decided by the Word of God, that men who perish might have "chosen life." (P. 438.)
   (2.) The natural reason of mankind is in direct opposition to the doctrine. (P. 439.)
3. The metaphysical doctrine is, that the will is swayed by motives which arise from circumstances beyond the control of man; but, (p. 439,)
   (1.) This still leaves us in the difficulty, that men are bound by a chain of events established by an almighty power.
   (2.) The doctrine is contradicted by the *language* of men in all countries and ages.
   (3.) We deny the necessary connexion between motive and volition. That the mind acts generally under the influence of motives may be granted, but that it is operated upon by them *necessarily*, is contradicted,
      (a.) By the fact of our often acting under the *weakest* reason, which is the character of all sins against judgment; and,
      (b.) By the fact that we have power to displace one motive by another, and to control those circumstances from which motives flow.

(IV.) *The divine sovereignty.* (P. 422.)

The Calvinistic doctrine is, that God does what he wills, only because he wills it. But it can be shown from Scripture, that the acts of the divine *will* are under the direction of the divine *wisdom*, *goodness*, and *justice*.

(V.) The case of *heathen nations* is sometimes referred to by Calvinists as presenting equal difficulties to those urged against election and reprobation. But the cases are not parallel, unless it be granted that heathen, *as such*, are excluded from heaven. (P. 444.)

1. Heathen are bad enough, but the question is not what they are, but what they might be: they are under the patriarchal dispensation, and
2. St. Paul affirms that the divine law has not perished from among them, but that if they live up to the light which they possess they may be saved.

(VI.) *Irresistible grace.* We admit that man, in his simply *natural* state, is insufficient of himself to think or do anything of a saving tendency; and that when the Holy Spirit is vouchsafed, we are often entirely passive in the first instance; but we contend that the grace of God has

been bestowed upon all men, inasmuch as all are required to do those things which have a saving tendency. These premises

1. Establish the justice of God in the condemnation of men, and
2. Secure the glory of our salvation to the grace of God. (P. 448.)

(D.)—FURTHER BENEFITS OF REDEMPTION. (Ch. xxix.)

I. *Entire sanctification* of believers. That there is a distinction between a regenerate state and a state of perfect holiness, is sufficiently proved by the exhortations to believers in 1 Thess. v, 23, and 2 Cor. vii. 1.

1. The *time* when we are to expect this blessing has been disputed. It is admitted that the soul must be entirely cleansed before it can pass into heaven, but many contend that the final stroke to corruption can only be given at death; but
   (1.) The promise of sanctification is nowhere restricted in Scripture to the article of death.
   (2.) The soul's union with the body is nowhere represented as a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification. Romans vii, has indeed been adduced in proof of this, but it is clear that the apostle is giving the experience of one yet under the *law*, and not in a state of deliverance by Christ.
   (3.) This doctrine is disproved by those passages which connect sanctification with the subsequent exhibition of its fruits in life.
   (4.) It is disproved, also, by all those passages which require us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; for these are required of us in perfection and maturity, and necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils.
   (5.) This doctrine involves other antiscriptural consequences:—that the seat of sin is in the flesh; and that the flesh must not only lust against the spirit, but on many occasions be the conqueror.

   We conclude, then, that as sanctification can neither be referred to the hour of death, nor placed subsequently to this life, it is an attainment to which believers are called during this life.

2. The *manner* of sanctification. It may be, (1) gradual, or (2) instantaneous.

3. *Objections* to this doctrine.
   (1.) It supposes future impeccability. Nay: the angels sinned, and so did our first parents.
   (2.) It renders the atonement and intercession of Christ superfluous. Nay: for this state of sanctification is maintained by the constant influences of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed through Christ's intercession.
   (3.) It shuts out the use of the prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses." But, a) this prayer is designed for men in a mixed condition. b) *All* sin must not be continued, in order that this prayer may be employed.

And c) The defects and infirmities of a being *naturally* imperfect, are not inconsistent with moral holiness

II. *The right to pray* is another benefit which accrues to believers; and so is

III. *The special providence of God.*

IV. *Victory over death* is also awarded to them.

V. *The immediate reception of the soul into a state of blessedness.* "The sacred writers proceed on the supposition that the soul and the body are naturally distinct and separable, and that the soul is susceptible of pain or pleasure during that separation." Quotation from Campbell.

VI. *Resurrection of the body.* There is some dispute in regard to this doctrine —whether it implies a resurrection of the *substance* of the body, or of a minute and indestructible *germ.*

1. The only passage of Scripture which seems to favour the *germ* theory is 1 Cor. xv, 35: "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" These two questions both imply a doubt as to the fact, not an inquiry as to the modus agendi; and the apostle answers them by showing, in answer to the *first* question, that there is nothing incredible in the thing; and in answer to the *second*, that the doctrine of our reunion with the body implies nothing contrary to the hopes of liberation from the "burden of this flesh," because of the glorified qualities which God is able to give to matter. (P. 468.)

2. There are several *difficulties* connected with this theory; for on its hypothesis
   (1.) There is no resurrection of the *body;* for the germ cannot be called the body.
   (2.) There is no *resurrection* from *death* at all, but a *vegetation* from a secret principle of life.
   (3.) It is substantially the same with the pagan doctrine of metempsychosis.

An objection to the resurrection of the body has been drawn from the changes of its substance during life. This does not affect the doctrine, that the body which is laid in the grave shall be raised up. "But," we are told, "the same bodies that sin may not be punished." We answer, that the soul is the only rewardable *subject*—the body is its *instrument.*

PART THIRD.

MORALS OF CHRISTIANITY.

OUTLINE.

(I.) The moral law. (Ch. i.)
(II.) The duties we owe to God. (Ch. ii, iii.)
(III.) Duties to our neighbour. (Ch. iv.)

(I.) THE MORAL LAW. (Ch. i.)

Preliminary observations:—

(1.) The morals of the New Testament are not presented to us in the form of a regular code.

(2.) The divine authority of the Old Testament is everywhere presupposed.

I. *The moral laws of the Old Testament pass into the Christian code.* (Pp. 469, 470.)

1. The ceremonial law is repealed, being adumbrative and temporary;
2. The political law also; but
3. The moral precepts are *not* repealed; but even incidentally re-enacted. *Scil.*, Christ's declaration, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil;" and Paul's, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" The argument, then, from the want of formal re-enactment, has no weight.
4. The entire decalogue is brought into the Christian code by a distinct injunction of its separate precepts. (Pp. 470, 471.)

II. *These laws, in the Christian code, stand in other and higher circumstances than under the Mosaic dispensation.*

1. They are extended more expressly to the *heart*.
2. They are carried out into a greater variety of duties.
3. There is a more enlarged injunction of positive and particular virtues.
4. All overt acts are connected with corresponding principles.
5. These laws are connected with promises of divine assistance.
6. They have a living illustration in the example of Christ.
7. They are connected with higher sanctions.

III. *All attempts to teach morals, independent of Christianity, must be of mischievous tendency.* (Pp. 472–474.)

1. Because such attempts convey the impression that *reason* alone could discover the duty of man.
2. Because they displace what is *perfect* for what is *imperfect.*
3. Because they turn away from the revealed law to inferior considerations such as beauty, fitness, &c.
4. Because they either enjoin duties merely outward in the act, or else assume that human nature is able to cleanse itself.
5. Because that by separating *doctrines* from *morals*, they propose a new plan, other than that of the gospel, for renovating and moralizing the world. Yet moral philosophy, if properly guarded, and taken in connexion with the whole Christian system, is not to be undervalued.

V. *As to the reasons on which moral precepts rest*, it may be remarked,

1. Some rest wholly on the authority of a revealer;
2. Others are accompanied with manifest rational evidence;
3. Others partially disclose their *rationale* to the anxious inquirer.

V. With respect to *the application of general precepts*, wide observation is necessary.

1. The precepts must be *general.*
2. *Exceptions* to general rules should be watched with jealousy.

VI. *Grounds of moral obligation.*

1. "Eternal and necessary fitness of things," leaves the question still open.
2. "Moral sense," also unsatisfactory; for
   (a.) Its indications are neither *perfect* nor *uniform.*
   (b.) Its mandates have no authority.
3. "Doctrine of the greatest good:" circuitous, and impossible in practice.
4. *The will of God*, then, the only true ground of moral obligation. The obligation is founded on the relation of the creature to the Creator.

VII. *Nature of moral rectitude.* (Payne's view.)

1. We sustain various relations to God.
2. We sustain various relations to each other.

Virtue is the conformity or harmony of man's affections or actions, with the various regulations in which he has been placed; and since these relations were constituted by God, *rectitude* may be regarded as conformity to the moral nature of God, the ultimate standard of virtue.

(II.) THE DUTIES WE OWE TO GOD. (Ch. ii, iii.)

Summed up in Scripture under the word *godliness*, embracing

I. *Internal principles.*

1. Submission to God.
   (a.) Grounded on the obligations (1) of creation, (2) of redemption.
   (b.) Regulated by his will, which is the highest rule of moral virtue,
      (1) Because of its authority.
      (2) Because it defines and enforces every branch of duty.
      (3) Because it annuls every contrary rule.
      (4) Because, instead of lowering its claims to suit man's weakness, it connects itself with the offer of strength from on high.
      (5) Because it accommodates itself to no man's interests.
      (6) Because it admits no exceptions in obedience.
2. Love to God.
   (a.) Its nature. (Pp. 481, 482.)
   (b.) Its importance in securing obedience. (Pp. 482, 483.)
3. Trust in God.
   (a.) Grounded on the divine injunction. Probable *reason*, to secure our peace of mind.
   (b.) Measured by the divine promises of help in the word of God.
   (c.) Hence connected with conversion, necessarily. (Pp. 484, 485.)
4. Fear of God.
   (a.) Its nature:—(1.) Reverential, not servile; yet (2.) Involving a sense of our conditional liability to his displeasure.
   (b.) Its practical influence.
5. Holiness rests upon these moral principles and habits.

II. *External duties.*

A. *Prayer.*

(a.) It is *enjoined* in Scripture. Matt. vii, 7; Luke xxi. 36; Phil. iv, 6; 1 Thess. v, 17. Where it is required to be (1.) Earnest: John iv, 24; Rom. xii, 12. (2.) Importunate: Luke xi; 2 Cor. xii, 8, 9. (3.) Offered for particular blessings: Phil. iv, 6; Psalm cxxii, 6; Zech. x, 1; 1 Tim. ii, 1–3, etc.

(b.) The *reason* on which it rests. We can infer from Scripture,
   1. That it cannot of itself produce in man a fitness for the reception of God's mercies.
   2. That it is not an *instrument* but a *condition* of grace. (Pp. 489, 490.)
   3. But that it preserves in men's minds a sense of God's agency in the world, and of the dependence of all creatures upon him. (P. 491.)

(c.) *Objections* to this duty.
   1. One is founded on predestination.

a. Answer on predestinarian principles insufficient and contradictory.
b. True answer, that although God has *absolutely* predetermined some things, there are others which he has *conditionally* predetermined.

2. A second is founded on the perfections of the divine character. Paley's answer.
3. A third is, that it is hard to conceive how prayer can affect the case of others.
   a. If it were so, that would not affect the duty.
   b. But it is no harder to conceive than why one man's virtues or vices should affect the condition of others, which is the case every day. (Pp. 493, 494.)

d.) *Division* of prayer. Four branches.

1. Ejaculatory.
   a. Its nature. b. Its advantages.
2. Private.
   a. Founded upon Christ's injunction and example.
   b. Designed to produce unlimited confidence in God our Father.
3. Family.
   a. Paley's view of it defective.
   b. Its obligation shown, (1.) From the very constitution of a family. (Pp. 496, 497.) (2.) From the fact that the earliest patriarchal worship was family worship, which was not revoked either by Judaism or Christianity. (Pp. 498, 499.)
   c. Its advantages.
4. Public.
   a. Its obligation shown. (P. 500.) (1.) From the *example* of public worship among the Jews. (2.) By *inference*, from the command to publish the gospel implying assemblies. (3.) By *direct* precepts, e. g., Paul's Epistles are commanded to be read in churches. (4.) From the practice of the primitive age, shown from St. Paul and St. Clement.
   b. Its advantages. (P. 501.)

(e.) *Forms* of prayer.

1. Worship should be spiritual—which was doubtless the character of that of the primitive Church. (P. 502.) Latin and Greek corruptions. The liturgies of the reformed churches purified from these corruptions.
2. Objections to forms of prayer.
   a. Absolute. But
      (1.) This objection involves principles which cannot be acted upon. (P. 503.)
      (2.) It disregards example and antiquity. Example of Jews: of John Baptist: of Christ: of primitive Church. (P. 504.)
   b. It is objected, that "forms composed for one age become unfit for another." But,

(1.) The form may be modified.
(2.) In fact, such forms have not become obsolete among us.
(3.) If opinions become unscriptural, the form is a safeguard against heresy.

c. "The repetition of the form produces weariness and inattention." Answer,
(1.) The devout will not grow weary.
(2.) The undevout will, even if extempore prayers are used.

d. "Forms must take too *general* a character." (P. 506.) Answer,
(1.) This is not true of the Liturgy of the Church of England.
(2.) If extempore prayer be allowed also, the objection has no weight.

3. Objections to extempore prayer.
a. It gives rise to extravagant addresses to God. Ans. This will only be the case where the preachers are foolish or incompetent.
b. It confuses the minds of the hearers. Ans. This lay against the inspired prayers in the Bible when first uttered; and would now lie against all occasional forms. Facts, too, disprove it.

4. Conclusion. That each mode has its advantages, and that their proper combination forms the best public service.

B. *Praise and thanksgiving.*
a. Psalms and hymns, to be sung with the voice, and united with the melody of the heart, are of apostolic injunction.
b. Uses. 1) To acknowledge God. 2) To promote suitable sentiments of gratitude and dependence in our hearts.

C. *Observance of the Lord's day.* (Ch. iii.)
I. Obligation. (Pp. 508–520.)
(1.) Though the observance is nowhere enjoined in so many words, yet, on the supposition that the Sabbath was instituted at the creation, we derive its obligation with great clearness from the Scriptures.
a. As to the observance of a Sabbath in general.
(1.) *Inferentially*, from the history of its observance from the creation down to the period of the gospel narrative, (p. 509,) while no Scripture indicates its abolition.
(2.) *Directly*, since the decalogue is binding on us, proved, (p. 510,)
(a.) By our Lord's declaration, that he "came not to destroy the law and the prophets."
(b.) By the text, "the Sabbath was made for man."
(c.) By St. Paul's reply, (Rom. iii, 31,) "Do we then make void the law through faith?"
b. As to the observance of a particular day:—
(1.) The change from the seventh to the first day was made by inspired men. (P. 511.)

(2.) This change did not alter the law of the Sabbath, which was not so circumstantial as to require uniform modes of reckoning time, and observance of latitudes and longitudes for its fulfilment. (P. 512.)

(3.) The original command says nothing of the epoch when the reckoning should begin. (Holden, pp. 512, 513.)

(4.) But, for the sake of *public worship*, the Sabbath should be *uniformly* observed by a whole community at the same time.

(II.) But it has been denied that the Sabbath *was* instituted at the creation. (P. 514.)

a. Paley's ground, as summed up and answered by Holden. His principal ground is, "that the first institution of the Sabbath took place during the sojourning of the Jews in the wilderness;" and from the passage in Exod. xvi, he infers,

1. "That if the Sabbath had been instituted at creation, there would be some mention of it in the history of the patriarchal ages." But this history is very brief: there are omissions in it more extraordinary, e. g., prayer and circumcision. The Sabbath is hardly mentioned in Joshua, Judges, Ruth, &c.; but the observance of it seems to be intimated by the division of time into weeks, in the patriarchal history.

2. "That there is not, in Exod. xvi, any intimation that the Sabbath was only the revival of an ancient institution." But the fact is, that it is mentioned exactly in the way an historian would, who had occasion to speak of a well-known institution.

3. Gen., chap. ii, is next adduced by Dr. Paley as not inconsistent with his opinion, as he concurs with those critics who suppose that Moses mentioned the sanctification of the Sabbath in that place, by *prolepsis*, in the order of connexion, not of time. But this doctrine is altogether gratuitous, and also inconsistent with the design of the sacred historian to give a clear and faithful history.

The law of the Sabbath, then, is *universal*, and not peculiar to the Jews.

II. Mode of observing the Christian Sabbath. (Pp. 520–524.)

1. There are two extremes: (1.) To regard the Sabbath merely as a prudential institution; (2.) To neglect the distinction between the *moral* and the *ceremonial* law of Moses: but yet,

2. Those precepts of the Levitical code which relate to the Sabbath are of great use to us, (p. 522;) though, independent of these,

3. We have throughout the Scriptures abundant guidance,—by which we learn, a.) That the Sabbath is to be a day of *rest* and *devotion*. b.) That works of mercy are not unlawful. c.) But that the *management* of public charities is too secular an employment for the Sabbath. d.) And that *amusements* and recreations are out of place, nay, sinful.

(III.) DUTIES TO OUR NEIGHBOUR. (Ch. iv.)

I. CHARITY, which is to be considered,

1 As to its *source.*

That source is a regenerated state of mind.

2 As to its *exclusiveness.* It shuts out all 1) anger; 2) implacability; 3) revenge; 4) prejudice; 5) evil-speaking; 6) petty aggressions, though legal 7) artificial distinctions, as its limitations.

3. As to its *active expression.*

(1.) It delights in sympathy, liberality, &c., as it is not merely negative.

(2.) It dictates and regulates *works of mercy.*

(3) It teaches us that we are only *stewards* of the divine goodness. (P. 528.)

II. JUSTICE. (I.) *Ethical.* (II.) *Economical.* (III.) *Political.*

(I.) *Ethical* justice respects,

A. Man's *natural* rights, which are,

1. Right to *life;* which is guarded by the precept, "Thou shalt not kill," &c.

2. Right of *property:* guarded by the law, "Thou shalt not steal nor covet."

3. Right of *liberty.* Manstealing is classed in the New Testament with the greatest crimes. In noticing the question of slavery, we remark,

a.) That slavery did exist under the Jewish law; but of a much milder type than that which prevailed in the surrounding nations; and all that can be inferred from it is, that a legislature may, in certain cases, be justified in mitigating, rather than abolishing, the evil.

b.) Every Christian government binds itself to be regulated by the principles of the New Testament, which are obviously opposed to slavery. (Pp. 531, 532.)

c.) Modern *African slavery* of course calls loudly for the application of such principles. The slaves have never lost the right to liberty; and that liberty should be restored. The manner of its restoration is in the power of government, provided, 1. That the emancipation be sincerely determined upon at some future time. 2. That it be not delayed beyond the period which the general *interest of the slaves themselves prescribes.* 3. That all possible means be adopted to render freedom a good to them.

B. The question may be asked, whether man himself has the power of surrendering these great natural rights at his own option?

1. With respect to *life.*

(1.) Where *duty* calls, (as in case of invasion, or when our allegiance to Christ must otherwise be laid down,) we are not only at liberty to take the risk, but bound to do it.

(2.) *Suicide* was considered unlawful by the ancients, on the ground of its being a violation of God's appointment; and modern ethical writers have added little to the force of their doctrines on the subject. Of course their views are inefficient. "Thou shalt not kill," is the divine prohibition against killing ourselves as well as others:—not, "Thou shalt do no murder," as Archbishop Whately incorrectly quotes, and then reasons upon. The crime of murder lies in the fact that man is made in the image of God—immortal. Self-murder is unpardonable.

(3.) *Duelling* involves the two crimes of murder and suicide.

2. With respect to *property*. Christianity teaches us that property is a *trust;* and that gambling, prodigality, &c., are violations of that trust.

3. *Liberty* cannot be voluntarily parted with under the Christian dispensation.

C. The right of *conscience* is now to be considered.

1. The *duty* of religious worship and opinions, and the *right* to the profession of the latter and practice of the former, are strictly correlative; and as the obligation to perform the duty cannot be removed, so neither can the right to its performance be destroyed.

2. But government has authority to take cognizance of the manner in which this right is exercised, and can interfere (1,) where the worship is vexatious to society in general; or (2,) the opinions subversive of the principles of social order; or (3,) where dangerous political opinions are connected with religious notions.

3. The case of those who reject revelation must be considered on its own merits. (P. 542.)

(1.) Simple *Deism* may afford such a plea of conscience as the state ought to admit, though rejected by a sound theologian.

(2.) To *Atheism* no toleration can be extended by a Christian government;—for, a) jurisprudence cannot coexist with such doctrines; b) they are subversive of the morals of the people; and, c) no conscience can be pleaded by their votaries for the avowal of such tenets.

III.) *Economical justice* respects those relations which grow out of the existence of men in families.

1. Relation of husband and wife, founded on the institution of marriage.

(1.) *Obligation* of marriage. General, but not imperative, on every man, in all circumstances. Exceptions require the justification of an equal or paramount obligation.

(2.) *Ends* of marriage.

(a.) To produce the greatest number of healthy children.

(b.) To fix the relations which give rise to the domestic affections, etc.

(c.) To prevent polygamy, which, 1, was forbidden by the original law, although the practice of the Jews may have fallen short of it; 2, was expressly forbidden by Christ in his discourse with the Pharisees; 3, is forbidden also by nature.

(d.) To prevent fornication, (p. 545:) which it does, 1, by providing for a lawful gratification of the sexual appetite; 2, by the mutual love which it presupposes in the parties, without which the institution is profaned.

(3.) *Character* of the marriage contract.

(a.) It is partly a civil contract—being under the control of the State for weighty reasons.

(b.) It is also a religious act, in which vows are made to God by the contracting parties. Though the Scriptures do not expressly assign its celebration to the ministers of religion, yet the State has wisely done it.

(4.) *Rights and duties* of marriage. (Pp. 547–550.)

2. Duties of children. Comprehensiveness of the precept, "Honour thy father and thy mother," embracing

(1.) *Love*, comprising esteem and gratitude.

(2.) *Reverence*, comprising, a,) the desire to please; b,) the fear to offend; c,) the external manifestation of these in honour and civility; and, d,) the support of parents when in necessity.

(3.) *Obedience*, which is to be universal, except in cases of conscience. This rule is most severely and frequently tried in regard to marriage. Here,

a.) The child is not bound to marry at the command of the parents.

b.) But should not violate their prohibition, except only when the parties are of age, and then only if, 1,) the opposition is to a child's marrying a religious person; or, 2,) is capricious; or, 3,) is unreasonable.

3. Duties of parents. (P. 553.)

(1.) *Love*, implying,

(a.) The natural instinct of affection, cultivated by religion.

(b.) The care and support of offspring.

(2.) *Instruction*, which includes,

(a.) The education of children in a way suited to their condition.

(b.) Their training in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord"—as the parent is a priest in his own family: and,

(c.) The affording them a godly example.

(3.) *Government*, which should be,

(a.) Mild and gentle.

(b.) Firm and faithful, implying even the use of corporeal punishment when necessary.

(4.) Provision for the settlement of children in the world is a duty of parents, only limited by their ability.

4. Duties of servant and master. (P. 555.)
   (a.) This is a relation which *must* exist, as equality of condition is impossible.
   (b) But it is a source of great evil, when unregulated by religion.
   (c) The precepts of the New Testament go to prevent this evil, by assigning,
      (1.) The duties of servants, viz., honour and obedience—which are to be cheerful and from the heart.
      (2) The reciprocal duties of servants and masters; involving obedience on the one part, and kindness, moderation, and justice, on the other; and,
      (3.) The religious duties of masters, including—1. Religious instruction. 2. The observance of the Sabbath. 3. Existing *influence* in favour of religion.

(III.) *Political justice.*

1. Origin of power. (P. 569.)
   (a.) The Scriptures declare government to be an ordinance of God.
   (b.) The doctrine of a "social compact" is therefore unscriptural
   (c.) Paley's view, which places the obligation in the will of God, as collected from expediency, is too loose: that will is declared in Scripture

2. Rights and duties of sovereign and subject reciprocal. (P. 562.)
   (a.) Duties of government,—enactment of just laws, etc. Obligation grounded on direct passages of Scripture. (Pp. 562, 563.)
   (b) Duties of subjects,—obedience, tribute, prayer, &c.

3. Question, "How far does it consist with Christian submission to endeavour to remedy the evils of a government?" (P. 564.)
   (a.) No *form* of government is enjoined in Scripture. Hence there is no divine right in particular families.
   (b.) Resistance to an *established* government, whatever may be its form, is consistent with duty only in certain extreme cases. (P. 556.) There are two kinds of resistance:—
      1. Of opinion. In order to be lawful, this resistance must be, (1) just; (2) directed against public acts; (3) practical; (4) deliberate; (5) not factious; (6) not respecting local but general interests.
      2. Of force. This may be divided into two kinds:—
         (1.) That of a controlling force in the government: e. g., the British Parliament, which can refuse supplies, etc. This resistance, which is implied by a constitution, is lawful, when advisedly and patriotically employed.
         (2.) That of arms. Three cases may be supposed:—
            a.) Where the nation enjoys and values good institutions. Here unjust aggressions will not succeed.

b.) Where popular opinion is only partly enlightened. Here the work of improvement should precede resistance. Should the despot triumph, patriotism will suffer. Should the reformers triumph, the ignorant mass run on into licentiousness: e. g., French Revolution and Parliamentary War.

c.) Where the sovereign power acts, by mercenaries or otherwise, in opposition to the views of the majority. Here resistance is justifiable: e. g., Revolution of 1688.

(c.) The case of *rival* governments.

(d.) Resistance for *conscience'* sake.

PART FOURTH.

INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY.

OUTLINE.

I. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Ch. i.

II. THE SACRAMENTS. Ch. ii–iv.

(I.) Number and nature of sacraments, (Ch. ii.)
(II.) Sacrament of baptism, (Ch. iii.)
(III.) Sacrament of Lord's supper, (Ch. iv.)

I. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Ch. i.

THE Church of Christ, in its largest sense, consists of all who have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ; in a stricter sense, it consists of those who are vitally united to Christ. Taken in either view, it is a visible, permanent society, bound to obey certain rules; and of course *government* is necessarily supposed to exist in it. We have four points to examine in this chapter:—

I. *The nature of this government.* It is wholly spiritual, for,

1. It is concerned only with spiritual objects.
2. Its only punitive discipline is comprised in "admonition," "reproof," "sharp rebukes," and finally, "excision from the society."

II. *The persons to whom this government is committed,* (P. 574.) It is necessary here to consider the composition of the primitive Church, as stated in the New Testament.

1. Enunciation of offices in the church. Eph. iv, 11.
2. Whether the words *bishop* and *presbyter* express two distinct sacred orders, has been a subject of much controversy. But it may be easily shown that there is no distinction of *order*, whatever distinction of *office* may exist.
   (1.) The argument from the promiscuous use of these terms in the New Testament seems incontrovertible. Acts xx, 28; Titus i, 5; Phil. i, 1; 2 John 1; &c.
   (2.) A distinction between bishops and presbyters did indeed arise at a very early period; but it proves nothing for a superior *order*, nor

for diocesan episcopacy; for it cannot be shown that the *power of ordination* was given to bishops to the exclusion of presbyters; and this early distinction may be easily accounted for.

a.) It became expedient, doubtless, in the meetings of presbyters, at a very early period, that one should be chosen to preside over the rest; but the practice, as testified subsequently by Jerome, was founded solely upon *expediency*. It is to be remembered, that the primitive churches were formed very much upon the model of the Jewish synagogues.

b.) As Christianity made its way, the concerns of the districts of country surrounding cities naturally fell under the cognizance of the bishops of those cities. Thus *diocesans* arose; subsequently, metropolitans, primates, patriarchs; and finally the pope came in. (Pp. 579–582.)

(3.) The doctrine of *succession* cannot be made out; and if it could, would only trace diocesan bishops to the bishops of parishes.

(4.) As for episcopacy itself, it may be freely allowed as a prudential regulation, wherever circumstances require it. But it may be questioned whether presbyters could lawfully surrender their rights of government and ordination into the hands of a bishop, without that security which arises from the accountability of the administrator. (Pp. 582–586.)

3. On the subject of the *church* itself, very different views have been held.

(1.) The Papist view contends for its visible unity throughout the world, under a visible head. (P. 586.)

(2.) The modern Independent view goes as far the other way. (P. 587.)

The persons appointed to feed and govern the church being, then, those who are called "*pastors*," we have now to notice,

III. *The share which the body of the people have in their own government.* (Pp. 587–596.)

a General views.

1. The connexion of church and state gives rise to questions of peculiar perplexity and difficulty. We do not consider the church in this state.

2. The New Testament view of the churches is, that they are associations founded upon conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the obligatory nature of the commands of Christ; and the mutual interdependence of pastors and people, with perfect religious liberty, is everywhere recognized in it.

3. Questions of church government are often argued on the false ground that the governing power, in churches to which communion is perfectly voluntary, is of the same character as when it is connected with the civil authority Nothing can be more fallacious.

4. In settling church government, there are pre-existing laws of Christ, which cannot be neglected or set aside. The government of the church is *in its pastors*, open to formal modifications; and it is to be

conducted with *such a concurrence of the people* as shall guard against abuse, without interfering with the Scriptural exercise of pastoral duties.

b. These views applied to particular cases.

(1.) As to the ordination of ministers. This power was never conveyed by the people: it was vested in the ministers alone, to be exercised on their responsibility to Christ. (Pp. 590, 591.)

(2.) As to the laws by which the church is to be governed. Those which are explicitly contained in the New Testament are to be executed by the rulers, and obeyed by the people. (Pp. 591–594.)

(3.) Other disciplinary regulations are matters of mutual agreement; but democratic tendencies are to be shunned. (P. 594.)

(4.) Power of admission and expulsion rests with the pastor, as also that of trying unworthy servants. (P. 595.)

IV. *The ends to which church authority is legitimately directed.*

1. The preservation and publication of sound doctrine: called by systematic writers, *potestas δογματικη*: which may be thus summed up:—

(1.) To declare the sense in which the church interprets the language of Scripture.

(2.) To require all its members to examine such declarations of faith with docility and humility; while their right of private judgment is not violated.

(3.) To silence within its pale all preaching contrary to its standards.

2. The power of regulation: called, technically, *potestas διαταικτικη*.

3. The power of inflicting and removing censures: *potestas διακριτικη*. (Pp. 600–605.)

(1.) Undoubtedly this power lies in the church: it has, however, been sadly abused.

(2.) The claims of the Romish Church, in this particular, are arrogant assumptions: e. g., views founded on the gift of the keys to St. Peter.

The labour of church government, and its difficulty, will always be greatly mitigated by a steady regard, on the part of both pastors and people, to *duties* as well as to *rights*. (P. 605.)

II. THE SACRAMENTS. Ch. ii–iv.

(1) NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE SACRAMENTS. (Ch. ii.)

I. *Number* of the sacraments. Two only, baptism and the Lord's supper, are instituted in the New Testament, and admitted by Protestants; the Romish Church added five others.

1. The word used by the Greek Fathers was *μυστηριον*; the Latin term is *sacramentum*, which signified (1,) a sacred ceremony, and (2,) the oath

of fidelity taken by the Roman soldiers. For both these reasons, probably, the term was adopted by the Roman Christians.

2. The sacraments are to be viewed as federal acts, which view sweeps away the five superstitious additions of the Romish Church—confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction.

II. *Nature* of the sacraments. There are three leading views. (P. 608.)

1 That of the Church of Rome, *gratia ex opere operato*, that the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and confer it, by the work itself. The objections to this doctrine are,

(1.) It has no pretence of authority from Scripture, nay,

(2.) It is decidedly antiscriptural.

(3.) It debases the ordinance into a mere charm.

(4.) It tends to licentiousness.

(5.) It causes the virtue of the ordinance to depend upon the intention of the administrator.

2. The opposite view is that of the Socinians, to which some orthodox Protestants have carelessly leaned,—that the sacraments are valuable solely as emblems of the spiritual and invisible. This scheme is as defective as that of the Papists is excessive.

3. The third opinion is that of the Protestant churches:—expressed in the language (1,) of the Heidelberg Catechism, (2,) of the Church of England, (3,) of the Church of Scotland, containing the same leading views, that the sacraments are both *signs* and *seals*.

(a.) Sense in which they are *signs*.

(b.) Sense in which they are *seals*.

(II.) SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM. (Ch. iii)

The *obligation* of baptism rests upon (1,) the example of our Lord; (2,) his command to the apostles, Matthew xxviii, 19; (3,) upon the practice of the apostles themselves.

I. *The nature of baptism.*

a. The Romanists consider baptism by a priest as of *itself* applying the merits of Christ to the person baptized; and from this view arises their distinction between sins committed before and after baptism. The Lutheran Church places the efficacy of this sacrament in regeneration; nor has the Church of England departed entirely from the terms used by the Romish Church. The Quakers reject the rite altogether; and the Socinians merely regard it as a mode of professing the religion of Christ.

b. The orthodox view is, that baptism is a federal transaction. (P. 614.) It is of great importance to establish the *covenant* character of this ordinance.

1.) The covenant with Abraham, Gen. xvii, 7, was the general covenant

of grace, and not chiefly a political and national covenant. There are *five* distinct stipulations, under which—though they were promises of temporal advantages—are conveyed a higher and spiritual covenant of grace.

(2.) Circumcision was its "sign and seal," both temporally and spiritually.

(3.) As a seal of restriction, circumcision was done away by Christ. (P. 617.)

(4.) Paul's different views of circumcision may be explained by considering the different principles on which circumcision might be practised after it had become an obsolete ordinance—1, 2, 3, 4 (Pp. 618, 619.)

(5.) Baptism is, to the *new* covenant, what circumcision was to the old, and took its place by the *appointment of God.* (P. 620.) This may be argued, 1. From our Lord's commission to the apostles, Matthew xxviii, 19; Mark xvi, 15, 16. 2. From the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born," &c. (P. 621.) 3. From Col. ii, 10–12, "And ye are complete in him," &c. (P. 621.) 4. From Gal. iii, 27–29, "For as many of you as have been baptized," & (P. 622.) 5. From 1 Pet. iii, 20: "Which some time were disobedient," &c. (P. 622.)

a. Baptism is here called the *antitype* of Noah's salvation by the ark, because his building and entering it were the visible expression of his faith.

b. The meaning of the passage will vary with the rendering of the word ἐπερώτημα; but

c. However that word is rendered, the whole text shows that baptism, when an act of true faith, becomes an instrument of salvation.

(6.) Baptism, both as a *sign* and *seal*, presents an entire correspondence to the ancient rite of circumcision. (Pp. 625–629.)

1. As a *sign.* Circumcision exhibited the *placability* of God; held out the promise of justification; and was the sign of sanctification: so baptism exhibits the divine placability; is the initiatory rite into the covenant of pardon; and is the symbol of regeneration. But baptism as a *sign*, is more than circumcision, implying the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in its *fulness.*

2. As a *seal.* As in circumcision blessings were pledged *on the part of* God, so in baptism are all spiritual gifts pledged; and as in circumcision a holy life was promised on *the part of the believer*, so in baptism do we pledge ourselves to the obedience of Christ.

Booth's objection, and the reply.

¶ *Subjects of baptism.*

a. All *adults* who possess faith in Christ. (P. 629.)

b. *Infant children.* The practice of infant baptism may be shown to rest upon the strongest basis of Scriptural authority.

(1.) Infants were circumcised; baptism takes the place of circumcision:

therefore the absence of an explic t exclusion of infants is sufficient proof of their title to baptism.

(2.) The fact that the baptism of infants is nowhere prohibited in the New Testament, must have been misleading to all men, and especially to Jewish believers, if it were not proper.

1. Baptisms were common among the Jews; their proselyte baptism was a baptism of *families*, and comprehended their infant children (Pp. 631–633.)
2. The words of Peter at the Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized; for the promise is unto you and to your children," could not have been understood by the Jews except as calling upon them and their children to be baptized. Reasons, 1, 2, 3. (Pp. 633–635.)

3.) Infant children are declared by Christ to be members of his Church. (Pp. 635–639.)

1. They were so under the old dispensation, and no change was made. (P. 635.)
2. We have our Lord's direct testimony to this point—in two remarkable passages: a) Luke ix, 47, 48; b) Mark x, 14. Notice the Baptist evasions of the argument from this latter passage. (Pp. 636–639.)

(4.) The argument from apostolic practice next offers itself.

As to the absence of any express mention of infant baptism, instead of bearing in favour of the Baptists, it is a strong argument against them; for such an extraordinary alteration as the forbidding of infant baptism would have required particular explanation. The baptisms of *whole houses*, mentioned in the Acts, are sufficient proof of the apostolic practice; they were either (1) *instances* of apostolic action, which would cover the whole ground, or (2) peculiar cases; and even if this latter be admitted, the Baptist must still show, that neither in the family of

1. The Philippian jailer, (p. 640,) nor in that of
2. Lydia, (p. 641,) nor yet in that of
3. Stephanas, (1 Cor. i, 16,) (p. 642,) were there *any* infants at all, which, to say the least of it, is very improbable.

(5.) The last argument may be drawn from the antiquity of the practice of infant baptism. (Pp. 644–646.)

1. We have strong presumptive proof of its antiquity in the fact, that if it were ever introduced as an innovation, it was introduced without controversy!
2. Tertullian (second century) was the only ancient writer who opposed infant baptism; but his very opposition proves the practice older than himself: he never speaks of its *novelty*.
3. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Origen, mention infant baptism as the practice of their times; and in A. D. 254 the question of deferring baptism to the eighth day was discussed. (P. 645.)
4. The Anabaptists are of modern origin. (P. 646.)

III. *Benefits of baptism.*

1. To the adult believer it is, (1) the sign of his admission into the covenant of grace; (2) the seal, on the part of God, of the fulfilment of all its provisions; (3) the pledge, on his own part, of steadfast faith and obedience.
2. To the infant it conveys a pledge of divine grace; the present blessing of Christ; the gift of the Holy Spirit; and the respect which God has to the believing act of the parents.
3. To the parents it is a blessing also.

IV *Mode of baptism.* This is comparatively of little moment, but has been the subject of much controversy. In considering the doctrine, that the only legitimate mode of baptizing is by immersion, we notice,

a. *Several presumptions against it.* (Pp. 647, 648.)
(1.) It is not expressly enjoined.
(2.) It is unsuitable to many climates and circumstances; nay, sometimes impossible.
(3.) It puts away the consideration of health and life in many cases.
(4.) It is likely to distract the thoughts.
(5.) It is improbable that the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost were immersed, or that the jailer's family were.
(6.) The practice is not a decent one.

b. *The argument from antiquity.* (Pp. 648–650.)
(1.) Immersion is ancient,—so is anointing with oil, &c.
(2.) Aspersion and affusion are also ancient,—witness Tertullian, Cyprian, Gennadius, Aquinas, Erasmus.
(3.) The baptism of *naked* subjects was ancient,—doubtless a superstitious extension of the original rite.

c. *The argument from the New Testament.* (Pp. 650–660.)
(1.) Use of the word βαπτίζω.
1. The verb, with its derivatives, signifies either to dip, stain, wet with dew, &c.
2. Employment of it in Scripture illustrated by various passages:—2 Kings iii, 11; Luke vii, 44; Dan. iv, 33; 1 Cor. x, 2. It is used generally in the New Testament to express the act of pouring or sprinkling water.
(2.) Cases of baptism (in the New Testament) adduced commonly in proof of immersion.
1. John's baptism, (p. 652,) "They were baptized of him *in* Jordan," therefore they were immersed, is the argument. But,
(a.) The object of this passage was to declare the *place*, not the *mode* of John's baptism.
(b.) The "baptism with the Holy Ghost" sufficiently illustrates the mode of John's baptism, the same form of words being used in regard to both.

(c) The character of the river, and the scarcity of water, accounts for the place of baptism, and for the language employed here to fix it. (Pp. 653, 654.) River baptism does not necessarily imply immersion. Quotation from Wolfe.

2. Our Lord's baptism. "He went up straightway out of the water." Matthew iii, 16. This does not favour immersion more than any other mode of baptism.

3. The eunuch's baptism. "And when they were come up out of the water," &c. Acts viii, 38. If this proves any immersion, it proves that Philip was immersed as well as the eunuch. But εἰς and ἐκ do not necessarily mean *into* and *out of*.

4. Baptism by Jesus and by John in Ænon, John iii, 22. No proof of immersion.

(3.) Argument from Romans vi, 3, 4: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism," &c. Here the Baptists suppose a comparison is instituted between the burial of Christ and immersion. But,

1. If such resemblance be intended by "buried," why not also by "planted" and "crucified," both which terms are used in the same connexion? (P. 657.)

2. The type of our death, burial, and resurrection as believers, in this passage, is not the clumsy one of immersion; but the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord. (Pp. 657–659.)

We conclude, therefore, that the pouring out of water was the apostolic mode of administering the ordinance, and that washing and immersion were introduced later, along with other superstitious additions to this sacrament.

(III.) SACRAMENT OF LORD'S SUPPER. (Ch. iv.)

Agreement and difference between baptism and the Lord's supper, as stated in the Catechism of the Church of Scotland. We notice now,

I. *The institution of the ordinance.*

1. As baptism took the place of circumcision, so the Lord's supper was instituted in place of the passover.

2. It was instituted by Christ, immediately after celebrating the passover for the last time with his disciples.

II. *Its perpetuity and obligation.* (P. 661.) From 1 Cor. xi, 23–26, we learn,

1. That Paul received a special revelation as to this ordinance.

2. That the command of Christ, "This do in remembrance of me," was laid by Paul upon the Corinthians.

3. That he regarded the Lord's supper as a rite to be *often* celebrated.

III. *Its nature.*

1. Various views of

(1.) The Church of Rome, which held the doctrine of transubstantiation;

of an intrinsic value in the elements themselves, of the elements being proper objects of worship and homage; and of the cup being withheld from the laity.

(2.) Luther, who held that though the bread and wine remain unchanged, the body and blood of Christ are received together with them: the doctrine of consubstantiation.

(3.) Carolostadt and Zuingle, who taught that the bread and wine are the *signs* of the absent body and blood of Christ. This view is adopted, with some liberality, by the Socinians.

(4.) The Reformed Churches, which reject both transubstantiation and consubstantiation, but go further than the Socinians, in declaring that to all who remember Christ worthily, he is spiritually present in the sacrament.

2. Sacramental character of the ordinance. (P. 667.)

(1.) As to Christ. The words, "This is my body," &c., show that the Lord's supper is a visible sign that the covenant was ratified by the sacrificial death of Christ.

(2.) As to the recipients. It is a recognition of their faith in the sacrificial death of Christ.

(3.) As a sign, it exhibits, a) the love of God, b) the love of Christ, c) the extreme nature of his sufferings, d) the vicarious character of his death, e) the benefits derived from it through faith.

(4.) As a seal, it is, a) a pledge of the continuance of God's covenant, b) a pledge to each believer of God's mercies, c) an exhibition of Christ as the spiritual food of the soul, d) a renewed assurance of divine grace.

IV *General observations.*

1 The ordinance excludes, not only open unbelievers, but all who deny the atonement.

2 All are disqualified who do not give evidence of genuine repentance and desire for salvation.

3 Every church should shut out such persons by discipline.

4 But the table of the Lord is not to be surrounded with superstitious terrors.

5 There is no rule as to the frequency of celebrating the ordinance

6 Its habitual neglect by professing Christians is highly censurable.

PART FIRST

EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

CHAPTER I.

MAN A MORAL AGENT.

THE theological system of the Holy Scriptures being the subject of our inquiries, it is essential to our undertaking to establish their Divine authority. But before the *direct* evidence which the case admits is adduced, our attention may be profitably engaged by several considerations, which afford *presumptive* evidence in favour of the revelations of the Old and New Testaments. These are of so much weight that they ought not, in fairness, to be overlooked; nor can their force be easily resisted by the impartial inquirer.

The *moral agency* of man is a principle on which much depends in such an investigation; and, from its bearing upon the question at issue, requires our first notice.

He is a moral *agent* who is capable of performing moral actions; and an *action* is rendered *moral* by two circumstances,—that it is *voluntary*,—and that it has respect to some *rule* which determines it to be good or evil. "Moral good and evil," says LOCKE, "is the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good or evil is drawn upon us from the will or power of the law maker."

The terms found in all languages, and the laws which have been enacted in all states with accompanying penalties, as well as the praise or dispraise which men in all ages have expressed respecting the conduct of each other, sufficiently show that man has always been considered as an agent actually performing, or capable of performing moral actions, for as such he has been treated. No one ever thought of making laws to regulate the conduct of the inferior animals; or of holding them up to public censure or approbation.

The rules by which the moral quality of actions has been determined are, however, not those only which have been embodied in the legislation of civil communities. Many actions would be judged good or evil, were all civil codes abolished; and others are daily condemned or approved in the judgment of mankind, which are not of a kind to be recognized by public laws. Of the moral nature of human actions there must have been a perception in the minds of men, previous to the enact-

ment of laws. Upon this common perception al law is founded, and claims the consent and support of society; for in all human legislative codes there is an express or tacit appeal to principles previously acknowledged, as reasons for their enactment.

This distinction in the moral quality of actions previous to the establishment of civil regulations, and independent of them, may in part be traced to its having been observed, that certain actions are injurious to society, and that to abstain from them is essential to its well being. Murder and theft may be given as instances. It has also been perceived, that such actions result from certain affections of the mind; and the indulgence or restraint of such affections has therefore been also regarded as a moral act. Anger, revenge, and cupidity, have been deemed evils as the sources of injuries of various kinds; and humanity, self government, and integrity, have been ranked among the virtues; and thus both certain actions, and the principles from which they spring, have, from their effect upon society, been determined to be good or evil.

But it has likewise been observed by every man, that individual happiness, as truly as social order and interests, is materially affected by particular acts, and by those feelings of the heart which give rise to them; as for instance, by anger, malice, envy, impatience, cupidity, &c; and that whatever civilized men in all places and in all ages have agreed to call VICE, is inimical to health of body, or to peace of mind, or to both. This, it is true, has had little influence upon human conduct; but it has been acknowledged by the poets, sages, and satirists of all countries, and is adverted to as matter of universal experience. While therefore there is in the moral condition and habits of man *something* which propels him to vice, uncorrected by the miseries which it never fails to inflict, there is also *something* in the constitution of the human soul which renders vice subversive of its happiness, and *something* in the established law and nature of things, which renders vice incompatible with the collective interests of men in the social state.

Let that then be granted by the THEIST which he cannot consistently deny, the existence of a Supreme Creator, of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and justice, who has both made men and continues to govern them; and the strongest presumption is afforded by the very constitution of the nature of man, and the relations established among human affairs, which with so much constancy dissociate happiness from vicious passions, health from intemperance, the peace, security, and improvement of society from violence and injustice,—that the course of action which best secures human happiness, has the sanction of HIS will, or in other words that HE, by these circumstances, has given his authority in favour of the practice of virtue, and opposed it to the practice of vice. (1)

(1) "As the manifold appearances of design and of final causes, in the constitution of the world, prove it to be the work of an intelligent mind; so the

But though that perception of the difference of moral actions which is antecedent to human laws, must have been strongly confirmed by these facts of experience, and by such observations, we have no reason to conclude that those rules by which the moral quality of actions has, in all ages, been determined, were formed solely from a course of observation on their tendency to promote or obstruct human happiness; because we cannot collect either from history or tradition, that the world was ever without such rules, though they were often warped and corrupted. The evidence of both, on the contrary, shows, that so far from these rules having originated from observing what was injurious and what beneficial to mankind, there has been, among almost all nations, a constant reference to a declared *will* of the Supreme God, or of supposed deities, as the *rule* which determines the good or the evil of the conduct of men; which will was considered by them as a *law*, prescribing the one and restraining the other under the sanction, not only of our being left to the natural injurious consequences of vicious habit and practice in the present life, or of continuing to enjoy the benefits of obedience in personal and social happiness here; but of positive reward and positive punishment in a future life.

Whoever speculated on the subject of morals and moral obligation in any age, was previously furnished with these general notions and distinctions. They were in the world before him; and if all tradition be not a fable, if the testimony of all antiquity, whether found in poets or historians, be not delusive, they were in the world in those early periods when the great body of the human race remained near the original seat of the parent families of all the modern and now widely extended nations of the earth; and in those early periods they were not regarded as distinctions of mere human opinion and consent, but were invested with a *Divine authority*.

We have then before us two presumptions, each of great weight. FIRST, that those actions which among men have almost universally been judged *good*, have the implied sanction of the will of our wise and good Creator being found in experience, and by the constitution of our nature and of human society, most conducive to human happiness. And, SECOND, that they were originally in some mode or other prescribed and enjoined as his *law*, and their contraries prohibited.

If therefore there is presumptive evidence of only ordinary strength,

particular final causes of pleasure and pain, distributed among his creatures, prove that they are under his government—what may be called his natural government of creatures endued with sense and reason. This, however, implies somewhat more than seems usually attended to when we speak of God's natural government of the world. It implies government of the very same kind with that which a master exercises over his servants, or a civil magistrate over his subjects." *Bishop* BUTLER.)

that the rule by which our actions are determined to be good or evil is primarily a law of the Creator, we are all deeply interested in ascertaining where that law exists in its clearest manifestation. For ignorance of the law, in whole or in part, will be no excuse for disobedience, if we have the opportunity of acquainting ourselves with it; and an accurate acquaintance with the rule may assist our practice in cases of which human laws take no cognizance, and which the wilfully corrupted general judgment of mankind may have darkened. And should it appear either that in many things we have offended more deeply than we suspect, whether wilfully or from an evitable ignorance; or that, from some common accident which has befallen our nature, we have lost the power of entire obedience without the use of new and extraordinary means, the knowledge of the rule is of the utmost consequence to us, because by it we may be enabled to ascertain the precise relation in which we stand to God our Maker; the dangers we have incurred; and the means of escape, if any have been placed within our reach.

CHAPTER II.

THE RULE, *which determines the Quality of* MORAL ACTIONS, *must be presumed to be matter of* REVELATION FROM GOD.

IT is well observed by a judicious writer, that "all the distinctions of good and evil refer to some principle above ourselves; for, were there no Supreme Governor and Judge to reward and punish, the very notions of good and evil would vanish away: they could not exist in the minds of men, if there were not a Supreme Director to give laws for the measure thereof." (*Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things, &c.*)

If we deny the existence of a Divine law obligatory upon man, we must deny that the world is under Divine government, for government without rule or law is a solecism; and to deny the Divine government, would leave it impossible for us to account for that peculiar nature which has been given to man, and those relations among human concerns and interests to which we have adverted, and which are so powerfully affected by our conduct:—certain actions and habits which almost all mankind have agreed to call good, being connected with the happiness of the individual, and the well being of society; and so on the contrary. This too has been matter of uniform and constant experience from the earliest ages, and warrants therefore the conclusion, that the effect arises from original principles and a constitution of things which the Creator has established. Nor can any reason be offered why such a nature should be given to man, and such a law impressed on the circumstances and beings with which he is surrounded, except that both had an intended

relation to certain courses of action as the sources of order and happiness, as truly as there was an intended relation between the light and the eye which is formed to receive its rays.

But as man is not carried to this course of action by physical impulse or necessity; as moral conduct supposes choice and therefore instruction, and the persuasion of motives arising out of it; the benevolent intention of the Creator as to our happiness could not be accomplished without instruction, warning, reward, and punishment; all of which necessarily imply superintendence and control, or, in other words, a moral government. The creation therefore of a being of such a nature as man, implies Divine government, and that government a Divine law.

Such a law must be the subject of REVELATION. Law is the will of a superior power; but the will of a superior visible power cannot be known without some indication by *words* or *signs*, in other terms, without a revelation; and much less the will of an invisible power, of an order superior to our own, and confessedly mysterious in his mode of existence, and the attributes of his nature.

Again, the will of a superior is not in justice binding until, in some mode, it is sufficiently declared; and the presumption, therefore, that God wills the practice of any particular course of action, on the part of his creatures, establishes the farther presumption, that of that will there has been a manifestation; and the more so if there is reason to suppose that any penalty of a serious nature has been attached to disobedience.

The revelation of this will or law of God may be made either by *action*, from which it is to be *inferred*; or by direct communication in *language*. Any indication of the moral perfections of God, or of his design in forming moral beings, which the visible creation presents to the mind; or any instance of his favour or displeasure toward his creatures clearly and frequently connected in his administration with any particular course of conduct, may be considered as a revelation of his will by *action*; and is not at all inconsistent with a farther revelation by the direct means of *language*.

The Theist admits that a revelation of the will of God has been made by significant actions, from which the duty of creatures is to be inferred, and contends that this is sufficient. "They who never heard of any external revelation, yet if they knew from the nature of things what is fit for them to do, they know all that God will or can require of them." (2)

They who believe that the Holy Scriptures contain a revelation of God's will, do not deny that indications of his will have been made by

(2) *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, p. 233.—"By employing our reason to collect the will of God from the fund of our nature, physical and moral, we may acquire not only a particular knowledge of those laws which are deducible from them, but a general knowledge of the manner in which God is pleased to exercise his supreme powers in this system." (BOLINGBROKE's Works, vol. v, p. 100.)

action; but they contend that they are in themselves imperfect and insufficient, and that they were not designed to supersede a direct revelation. They hold also, that a direct communication of the Divine will was made to the progenitors of the human race, which received additions at subsequent periods, and that the whole was at length embodied in the book called, by way of eminence, "The Bible."

The question immediately before us is, on which side there is the strongest *presumption* of truth. Are there, in the natural works of God, or in his manner of governing the world, such indications of the will of God concerning us, as can afford sufficient direction in forming a perfectly virtuous character, and sufficient information as to the means by which it is to be effected? We may try this question by a few obvious instances.

The Theist will himself acknowledge, that *temperance*, *justice*, and *benevolence*, are essential to moral virtue. With respect to the first, nothing appears in the constitution of nature, or in the proceedings of the Divine administration, to indicate it to be the will of God that the appetites of the body should be restrained within the rules of sobriety, except that, by a connection which has been established by him, the excessive indulgence of those appetites usually impairs health. If therefore we suppose this to amount to a tacit prohibition of excess, it still leaves those free from the rule whose firm constitutions do not suffer from intemperate gratifications; it gives one rule for the man of vigorous, and another for the man of feeble health; and it is no guard against that occasional insobriety which may be indulged in without obvious danger to health, but which nevertheless may be excessive in degree though occasional in recurrence. The rule is therefore imperfect.

Nor are the obligations of justice in this way indicated with adequate clearness. Acts of injustice are not like acts of excessive intemperance, punishable in the ordinary course of providence by pain and disease and premature death, as their *natural* general consequences; nor, in most instances, by any other marked infliction of the Divine displeasure in the present life. From their injurious effects upon society at large, indications of the will of God respecting them may doubtless be inferred, but such effects arise out of the grosser acts of fraud and rapine; those only affect the movements of society, (which goes on without being visibly disturbed by the violations of the nicer distinctions of equity which form an essential part of virtue,) and never fail to degrade and corrupt individual character. Rules of justice, therefore, thus indicated, would, like those of temperance, be very imperfect.

The third branch of virtue is benevolence, the disposition and the habit of doing good to others. But in what manner except by revelation are the extent and the obligation of this virtue to be explained? If it be said, that "the goodness of God himself as manifested in creation and pro-

vidence presents so striking an example of beneficence to his creatures, that his *will*, as to the cultivation of this virtue, may be unequivocally inferred from it," we cannot but perceive, that this example itself is imperfect, unless other parts of the Divine conduct be explained to us, as the Scriptures explain them. For if we have manifestations of his goodness, we see also fearful proofs of his severity. Such are the permission of pestilence, earthquakes, inundations: and the infliction of pain and death upon all men, even upon infants and unsinning animals. If the will of God in favour of beneficent actions is to be inferred from the pleasure which is afforded to those who perform them, it is only indicated to those to whom a beneficent act gives pleasure, and its non-performance pain; and it cannot therefore be at all apprehended by those who by constitution are obdurate, or by habit selfish. The rule would therefore be uncertain and dark, and entirely silent as to the extent to which beneficence is to be carried, and whether there may not be exceptions to its exercise as to individuals, such as *enemies*, *vicious persons*, and *strangers*.

Whatever general indications there may be in the acts of God, in the constitution of human nature, or in the relations of society, that some actions are according to the will of God, and therefore good, and that others are opposed to his will, and therefore evil; it follows then, that they form a rule too vague in itself, and too liable to different interpretations, to place the conduct of men under adequate regulation, even in respect of temperance, justice, and beneficence. But if these and other virtues, in their nicest shades, were indicated by the types of nature, and the manifestations of the will of God in his moral government, these types and this moral government are either entirely silent, or speak equivocally as to subjects of vital importance to the right conduct and effectual moral control, as well as to the hopes and the happiness of man.

There is no indication, for instance, in either nature or providence, that it is the will of God that his creatures should worship him; and the moral effects of adoration, homage, and praise, on this system, would be lost. There is no indication that God will be approached in prayer, and this hope and solace of man is unprovided for. Nor is there a sufficient indication of a future state of rewards and punishment; because there is no indubitable declaration of man's immortality, nor any facts and principles so obvious as to enable us confidently to infer it. All *observation* lies directly against the doctrine of the immortality of man. He *dies*, and the probabilities of a future life which have been established upon the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life, and the capacities of the human soul, are a presumptive evidence which has been adduced, as we shall afterward show, only by those to whom the doctrine had been transmitted by tradition, and who were therefore in possession of the *idea*: and, even then, to have any effectual force of

persuasion, they must be built upon antecedent principles furnished only by the revelations contained in Holy Scripture. Hence some of the wisest heathens, who were not wholly unaided in their speculations on these subjects by the reflected light of those revelations, confessed themselves unable to come to any satisfactory conclusion. The doubts of Socrates, who expressed himself the most hopefully of any on the subject of a future life, are well known; and Cicero, who occasionally expatiates with so much eloquence on this topic, shows by the skeptical expressions which he throws in, that his belief was by no means confirmed. (3) If, therefore, without any help from direct or traditional instruction, we could go as far as they, it is plain that our religious system would be deficient in all those motives to virtue which arise from the doctrines of man's accountability and a future life, and in that moral control which such doctrines exert: the necessity of which for the moral government of the world is sufficiently proved, by the wickedness which prevails even where these doctrines are fully taught.

Still farther, there is nothing in those manifestations of God and of his will, which the most attentive contemplatist can be supposed to collect from his natural works and from his sovereign rule, to afford the hope of pardon to any one who is conscious of having offended him, or any assurance of felicity in a future state, should one exist.

Some consciousness of offence is felt by every man; and though he should not know the precise nature or extent of the penalty attached to transgression, he has no reason to conclude that he is under a mild and fondly merciful government, and that therefore his offences will in course be forgiven. All observation and experience lie against this; and the case is the more alarming to a considerate mind, that so little of the sad inference that the human race is under a rigorous administration, depends upon reasoning and opinion: it is fact of common and daily observation. The minds of men are in general a prey to discontent and care, and are agitated by various evil passions. The race itself is doomed to wasting labours of the body or the mind, in order to obtain subsistence. Their employments are for the most part low and grovelling, in comparison of the capacity of the soul for intellectual pleasure and attainments. The mental powers, though distributed with great equality among the various classes of men, are only in the case of a few individuals ever awakened. The pleasures most strenuously sought are therefore sensual, degrading, and transient. Life itself, too, is precarious: infants suffer and die, youth is blighted, and thus by far the greater part of mankind is

(3) So in his *Tusc. Quest.* 1, he says, "*Expone igitur, nisi molestum est, primum animos, si potes, remanere post mortem; tum si minus id obtinebis (est enim arduum,) docebis carere omni malo mortem.* Show me first, if you can, and if it be not too troublesome, that souls remain after death; or if you cannot prove that, (for it is difficult,) declare how there is no evil in death."

swept away before the prime of life is attained. Casualties, plagues, famines, floods, and war, carry on the work of destruction. In the majority of states the poor are oppressed, the rich are insecure, private wrong is added to public oppression, widows are wronged, orphans are deprived of bread, and the sick and aged are neglected. The very religions of the world have completed human wretchedness by obdurating the heart, by giving birth to sanguinary superstitions, and by introducing a corruption of morals destructive of the very elements of well-ordered society. Part of these evils are *permitted* by the Supreme Governor, and part *inflicted*, either by connecting them as consequents to certain actions, or to the constitution of the natural world more immediately: but, whether permitted or inflicted, they are *punitive* acts of his administration, and present him before us, notwithstanding innumerable instances of his benevolence, as a Being of "terrible majesty." (4)

To remove in part the awful mystery which overhangs such an administration, the most sober Theists of former times, differing from the horde of vulgar blasphemers and metaphysical Atheists who have arisen in our own day, have been ready to suppose another state of being, to which the present has respect, and which may discover some means of connecting this permission of evil, and this infliction of misery, (often on the apparently innocent,) with the character of a Governor of perfect wisdom, equity, and goodness. But in proportion as any one feels himself obliged to admit and to expect a state of future existence, he must feel the necessity of being assured, that it will be a felicitous one. Yet should he be conscious of frequent transgressions of the Divine law; and at the same time see it demonstrated by facts occurring daily, that in the present life the government of God is thus rigorous, the only fair conclusion to which he can come is, that the Divine government will be conducted on precisely the same principles in another, for an infinitely perfect being changes not. Farther discoveries may then be made; but they may go only to establish this point, that the apparent severity of his dispensations in the present life are quite consistent with justice, and even the continued infliction of punishment with goodness itself, because other moral agents may be benefited by the example. The idea of a future life does not therefore relieve the case. If it be just that man should be punished here, it may be re-

(4) "Some men seem to think the only character of the Author of nature to be that of simple absolute benevolence. There may possibly be in the creation, beings, to whom he manifests himself under this most amiable of all characters, for it is the most amiable, supposing it not, as perhaps it is not, incompatible with justice; but he manifests himself to *us* as a righteous *Governor*. He may consistently with this be simply and absolutely benevolent; but he is, for he has given us a proof in the constitution and conduct of the world that he is, a Governor over servants, as he rewards and punishes us for our actions." (BUTLER'S *Analogy*.)

quired by the same just regard to the principles of a strictly moral government, that he should be punished hereafter.

If then we are offenders against the Majesty of so dread a being, as the actual administration of the world shows its Governor to be, it is in the highest degree necessary, if there be in him a disposition to forgive our offences, that we should be made acquainted with it, and with the means and conditions upon which his placability can become available to us. If he is not disposed to forgive, we have the greatest cause for alarm; if an inclination to forgive does exist in the Divine Mind, there is as strong a reason to presume that it is indicated to us *somewhere*, as that the *law* under which we are placed should have been expressly promulgated; and especially if such a scheme of bestowing pardon has been adopted as will secure the ends of moral government, and lead to our future obedience,—the only one which we can conceive to be worthy of God.

Now it is not necessary to prove at length, what is so obvious, that if we had no method of knowing the will and purposes of God, but by inferring them from his works and his government, we could have no information as to any purpose in the Divine Mind to forgive his sinning creatures. The Theist, in order to support this hope, dwells upon the proofs of the goodness of God with which this world abounds, but shuts his eyes upon the demonstrations of his severity; yet these surround him as well as the other, and the argument from the severity of God is as forcible against pardon, as the argument from his goodness is in its favour. At the best, it is left entirely uncertain; a ground is laid for heart-rending doubts, and fearful anticipations; and, for any thing he can show to the contrary, the goodness which God has displayed in nature and providence may only render the offence of man more aggravated, and serve to strengthen the presumption against the forgiveness of a *wilful* offender, rather than afford him any reason for hope.

The whole of this argument is designed to prove, that had we been left, for the regulation of our conduct, to infer the will and purposes of the Supreme Being from his natural works, and his administration of the affairs of the world, our knowledge of both would have been essentially deficient; and it establishes a strong presumption in favour of a direct revelation from God to his creatures, that neither his will concerning us, nor the hope of forgiveness, might be left to dark and uncertain *inference*, but be the subjects of an express *declaration*.

CHAPTER III.

FARTHER PRESUMPTION OF A DIRECT REVELATION *from the Weakness and Corruption of human Reason, and the want of Authority in merely human Opinions.*

IF we should allow that a perfect reason exercised in contemplating the natural works of God and the course of his moral government, might furnish us, by means of an accurate process of induction, with a sufficient rule to determine the quality of moral actions, and with sufficient motives to obedience, yet the case would not be altered; for that perfect reason is not to be found among men. It would be useless to urge upon those who deny the doctrine of Scripture, as to the fall of man, that his understanding and reason are weakened by the deterioration of his whole intellectual nature. But it will be quite as apposite to the argument to state a fact not to be controverted, that the reasoning powers of men greatly differ in strength; and that from premises, which all must allow to be somewhat obscure, different inferences would inevitably be drawn. Either then the Divine law would be what every man might take it to be, and, by consequence, a variable rule, a position which cannot surely be maintained; or many persons must fail of duly apprehending it. And though in this case it should be contended, that he is not punishable who obeys the law as far as he knows it, yet surely the ends of a steady and wisely formed plan of general government would on this ground be frustrated. The presumption here also must therefore be in favour of an express declaration of the will of God, in terms which the common understandings of men may apprehend, as the only means by which sufficient moral direction can be given, and effectual control exerted.

The notion, that by rational induction the will of God may be inferred from his acts in a sufficient degree for every purpose of moral direction, is farther vitiated by its assuming that men in general are so contemplative in their habits as to pursue such inquiries with interest; and so well disposed as in most cases to make them with honesty. Neither of these is true.

The mass of mankind neither are, nor ever have been, contemplative, and must therefore, if not otherwise instructed, remain ignorant of their duty; for questions of virtue, morals, and religion, as may be shown from the contentions of the wisest of men, do not for the most part lie level to the minds of the populace without a revelation. (5)

(5) "If philosophy had gone farther than it did, and from undeniable principles given us ethics in a science, like mathematics, in every part demonstrable, this yet would not have been so effectual to man in this imperfect state, nor pre-

It is equally a matter of undoubted fact, that in all questions of morals which restrain the vices, passions, and immediate interests of men, conviction is generally resisted, and the *rule* is brought down to the *practice*, rather than the practice raised to the rule; so that the most flimsy sophisms are admitted as arguments, and principles the most lax displace those of rigid rectitude and virtue. This is matter of daily observation and cannot be denied. The irresistible inference from this is, that at least, the great body of mankind, not being accustomed to intellectual exercises; not having even leisure for them on account of their being doomed to sordid labours; and not being disposed to conduct the investigation with care and accuracy, would never become acquainted with the will of the Supreme Governor, if the knowledge of it were only to be obtained from habitual observation and reasoning.—Should it be said, "that the intellectual and instructed part of mankind ought to teach the rest," it may be replied, that even that would be difficult, because their own knowledge must be communicated to others by the same process of difficult induction through which they attain it themselves, or rational conviction could not be produced in the minds of the learners. The task would therefore be hopeless as to the majority, both from their want of time and intellectual capacity. But, if practicable, the Theistical system has no provision for such instruction. It neither makes it the duty of some to teach, nor of others to learn. It has no authorized teachers; no day of rest from labour, on which to collect the auditors; no authorized religious ordinances by which moral truth may be brought home to the ears and the hearts of men: and, if it had, its best knowledge being rather contained in diffuse and hesitating speculation, than concentrated in maxims and first principles, embodied in a few plain words, which at once indicate some *master mind* fully adequate to the whole subject, and suddenly irradiate the understandings of the most listless and illiterate,—it would be taught in vain.

per for the cure. The greatest part of mankind want leisure or capacity for demonstration, nor can carry a train of proofs, which in that way they must always depend upon for conviction, and cannot be required to assent to till they see the demonstration. Wherever they stick, the teachers are always put upon proof, and must clear the doubt by a thread of coherent deductions from the first principle, how long or how intricate soever that be. And you may as soon hope to have all the day labourers and tradesmen, the spinsters and dairy maids, perfect mathematicians, as to have them perfect in ethics this way: having plain commands is the sure and only course to bring them to obedience and practice the greatest part cannot *know*, and therefore they must *believe*. And I ask whether one coming from heaven in the power of God, in full and clear evidence and demonstration of miracles, giving plain and direct rules of morality and obedience, be not likelier to enlighten the bulk of mankind, and set them right in their duties, and bring them to do them, than by reasoning with them from general notions and principles of human reason?" (LOCKE's *Reasonableness of Christianity.*)

Let us however suppose the truth discovered, the teachers of it appointed, and days for the communication of instruction set apart. With what *authority* would these teachers be invested? They plead no commission from Him whose will they affect to teach, and they work no miracles in confirmation of the truth of their doctrine. That doctrine cannot, from the nature of things, be mathematically demonstrated so as to enforce conviction, and it would therefore be considered, and justly considered, as the *opinion* of the teacher, and nothing but an opinion, to which every one might listen or not without any consciousness of violating an obligation, and which every one might and would receive as his own judgment agreed with or dissented from his unauthorized teacher, or as his interests and passions might commend or disparage the doctrine so taught. (6)

Facts are sufficiently in proof of this The sages of antiquity were moral teachers; they founded schools; they collected disciples; they placed their fame in their wisdom: yet there was little agreement among them, even upon the first principles of religion and morals; and they neither generally reformed their own lives, nor those of others. This is acknowledged by Cicero: "Do you think that these things had any influence upon the men (a very few excepted,) who thought and wrote and disputed about them? Who is there of all the philosophers, whose mind, life, and manners, were conformable to right reason? Who ever made his philosophy the law and rule of his life, and not a mere show of his wit and parts? Who observed his own instructions, and lived in obedience to his own precepts? On the contrary, many of them were slaves to filthy lusts, many to pride, many to covetousness," &c. (7)

(6) "Let it be granted, (though not true,) that all the moral precepts of the Gospel were known by somebody or other, among mankind before. But where, or how or of what use, is not considered. Suppose they may be picked up here and there; some from SOLON, and BIAS, in Greece; others from TULLY, in Italy, and, to complete the work, let CONFUCIUS as far as China be consulted, and ANACHARSIS the Scythian contribute his share. What will all this do to give the world a *complete morality*, that may be to mankind the unquestionable rule of life and manners? What would this amount to toward being a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under? Did *the saying* of ARISTIPPUS or CONFUCIUS give it an authority? Was ZENO a lawgiver to mankind? If not, what he or any other philosopher delivered was but *a saying of his*. Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their interest, passions, principles, or humours:—they were under no *obligation*: the opinion of this or that philosopher was of no AUTHORITY." (LOCKE's *Reasonableness, &c.*)

"The truths which the philosophers proved by speculative reason, were destitute of some more sensible authority to back them; and the precepts which they laid down, how reasonable soever in themselves, seemed still to want weight, and to be no more than PRECEPTS OF MEN." (DR. SAM. CLARKE.)

(7) Sed hæc eadem num censes apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum paucos, a

Such a system of moral direction and control, then, could it be formed, would bear no comparison to that which is provided by direct and external revelation, of which the doctrine, tho ugh delivered by different men, in different ages, is consentaneous throughout; which is rendered authoritative by Divine attestation; which consists in clear and legislative enunciation, and not in human speculation and laborious inference; of which the teachers were as holy as their doctrine was sublime; and which in all ages has exerted a powerful moral influence upon the conduct of men. "I know of but one Phædo and one Polemon throughout all Greece," saith ORIGEN, "who were ever made better by their philosophy; whereas Christianity hath brought back its myriads from vice to virtue."

All these considerations then still farther support the presumption, that the will of God has been the subject of *express revelation* to man, because such a declaration of it is the only one which can be conceived ADEQUATE; COMPLETE; OF COMMON APPREHENSION; SUFFICIENTLY AUTHORITATIVE; AND ADAPTED TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF MANKIND.

CHAPTER IV.

FARTHER PROOFS OF THE WEAKNESS AND UNCERTAINTY OF HUMAN REASON.

THE opinion, that sufficient notices of the will and purposes of God with respect to man, may be collected by rational induction from his works and government, attributes too much to the power of human reason and the circumstances under which, in that case, it must necessarily commence its exercise.

Human reason must be taken, as it is in fact, a weak and erring faculty, and as subject to have its operations suspended or disturbed by the influence of vicious principles and attachment to earthly things; neither of which can be denied, however differently they may be accounted for.

It is another consideration of importance that the exercise of reason is limited by our knowledge; in other words, that it must be furnished with subjects which it may arrange, compare, and judge: for beyond what it clearly conceives its power does not extend.

It does not follow, that, because many doctrines in religion and many rules in morals carry clear and decided conviction to the judgment instantly upon their being proposed, they were discoverable, *in the first instance*, by rational induction; any more than that the great and sim-

quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotus enim quisque philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat? &c. (*Tusc. Quest.* 2.

ple truths of philosophy, which have been brought to light by the efforts of men of superior minds, were within the compass of ordinary understandings, because, after they were *revealed* by those who made the discovery, they instantly commanded the assent of almost all to whom they were proposed. The very first principles of what is called natural religion (8) are probably of this kind. The reason of man, though it should assent to them, though the demonstration of them should be now easy, may be indebted even for them to the revelation of a superior mind, and that mind the mind of God. (9)

(8) The term natural religion is often used equivocally. "Some understand by it every thing in religion, with regard to truth and duty, which, when once discovered, may be clearly shown to have a real foundation in the nature and relations of things, and which unprejudiced reason will approve, when fairly proposed and set in a proper light; and accordingly very fair and goodly schemes of natural religion have been drawn up by Christian philosophers and divines, in which they have comprehended a considerable part of what is contained in the Scripture revelation. In this view natural religion is not so called because it was originally discovered by natural reason, but because when once known it is what the reason of mankind duly exercised approves, as founded in truth and nature. Others take natural religion to signify that religion which men discover in the sole exercise of their natural faculties, without higher assistance." (LELAND.)

(9) "When truths are once known to us, though by tradition, we are apt to be favorable to our own parts, and ascribe to our own understanding the discovery of what, in reality, we borrowed from others; or, at least, finding we can prove what at first we learnt from others, we are forward to conclude it an obvious truth, which, if we had sought, we could not have missed. Nothing seems hard to our understandings that is once known; and because what we see, we see with our own eyes, we are apt to overlook or forget the help we had from others who showed it us, and first made us see it, as if we were not at all beholden to them for those truths they opened the way to, and led us into; for, knowledge being only of truths that are perceived to be so, we are favorable enough to our own faculties to conclude that they, of their own strength, would have attained those discoveries without any foreign assistance, and that we know those truths by the strength and native light of our own minds, as they did from whom they received them by theirs,—only they had the luck to be before us. Thus the whole stock of human knowledge is claimed by every one as his private possession, as soon as he (profiting by others' discoveries) has got it into his own mind: and so it is; but not properly by his own single industry, nor of his own acquisition. He studies, it is true, and takes pains to make a progress in what others have delivered; but their pains were of another sort who first brought those truths to light which he afterward derives from them. He that travels the roads now, applauds his own strength and legs, that have carried him so far in such a scantling of time, and ascribes all to his own vigour; little considering how much he owes to their pains who cleared the woods, drained the bogs, built the bridges, and made the ways passable, without which he might have toiled much with little progress. A great many things which we have been bred up in the belief of from our cradles and are now grown familiar, (and, as it were, natural to us under the Gospel,) we take for unquestionable obvious truths, and easily demonstrable, without considering how long we might have been in doubt

This is rendered the more probable, inasmuch as the great principles of all religion, the existence of God, the immortality of the human soul, the accountableness of man, the good or evil quality of the most important moral actions, have, by none who have written upon them, by no legislator, poet, or sage of antiquity, however ancient, been represented as *discoveries* made by them in the course of rational investigation; but they are spoken of as things commonly known among men, which they propose to defend, explain, demonstrate, or deny, according to their respective opinions. If we overlook the inspiration of the writings of Moses, they command respect as the most ancient records in the world, and as embodying the religious opinions of the earliest ages; but Moses nowhere pretends to be the author of any of these fundamental truths. The book of Genesis opens with the words, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;*" but here the term "God" is used familiarly, and it is taken for granted, that both the name and the idea conveyed by it were commonly received by the people for whom Moses wrote.

The same writer gives the history of ages much higher than his own, and introduces the patriarchs of the human race holding conversations with one another in which the leading subjects of religion and morals are often incidentally introduced; but they are never presented to us in the form of *discussion;* no patriarch, however high his antiquity, represents himself as the discoverer of these first principles, though he might, as Noah, be a "*preacher*" of that "*righteousness*" which was established upon them. Moses mentions the antediluvians who were inventors of the arts of working metals, and of forming and playing upon musical instruments; but he introduces no one as the inventor of any branch of moral or religious science, though they are so much superior in importance to mankind.

In farther illustration it may be observed, that, in point of fact, those views on the subjects just mentioned which, to the reason of all sober *Theists*, since the Christian revelation was given, appear the most clear and satisfactory, have been found nowhere since patriarchal times, except in the Scriptures, which profess to embody the true religious traditions and revelations of all ages, or among those whose reason derived principles from these revelations on which to establish its inferences.

We generally think it a truth, easily and convincingly demonstrated, that there is a God; and yet many of the philosophers of antiquity

or ignorance of them had revelation been silent. And many others are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage too to the truths revelation has discovered; but it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first certain knowledge of them from thence, and in that clear evidence we now possess them." (LOCKE.)

speak doubtingly on this point, and some of them denied it. At the present day, not merely a few speculative philosophers in the heathen world, but the many millions of the human race who profess the religion of *Budhu*, not only deny a Supreme First Cause, but dispute with subtlety and vehemence against the doctrine.

We feel that our reason rests with full satisfaction in the doctrine that all things are created by one eternal and self-existent Being; but the Greek philosophers held that matter was eternally co-existent with God. This was the opinion of Plato, who has been called the Moses of philosophers. Through the whole "*Timæus*," Plato supposes two eternal and independent causes of all things; one, that *by* which all things are made, which is *God:* the other, that *from* which all things are made, which is *matter*. Dr. Cudworth has in vain attempted to clear Plato of this charge. The learned Dr. Thomas Burnet, who was well acquainted with the opinions of the ancients, says that "the Ionic, Pythagoric, Platonic and Stoic schools all agreed in asserting the eternity of matter; and that the doctrine, that matter was created out of nothing, seems to have been unknown to the philosophers, and is one of which they had no notion." Aristotle asserted the eternity of the world, both in matter and *form* too, which was but an easy deduction from the former principle, and is sufficiently in proof of its Atheistical tendency.

The same doctrine was extensively spread at a very ancient period throughout the east, and plainly takes away a great part of the foundation of those arguments for the existence of a Supreme Deity, on which the moderns have so confidently rested for the demonstration of the existence of God by rational induction, whether drawn from the works of nature, or from metaphysical principles; so much are those able works which have been written on this subject indebted to that revelation on which their authors too often close their eyes, for the very *bases* on which their most convincing arguments are built. The same Atheistical results logically followed from the ancient Magian doctrine of two eternal principles, one good and the other evil; a notion which also infected the Greek schools, as appears from the example of *Plutarch*, and the instances adduced by him.

No one enlightened by the Scriptures, whether he acknowledges his obligations to them or not, has ever been betrayed into so great an absurdity as to deny the *individuality* of the human soul; and yet where the light of revelation has not spread, absurd and destructive to morals as this notion is, it very extensively prevails. The opinion that the human soul is a part of God, enclosed for a short time in matter, but still a portion of his essence, runs through much of the Greek philosophy It is still more ancient than that, and, at the present day, the same opinion destroys all idea of accountability among those who in India follow the Brahminical system. "The human soul is God, and the

acts of the human soul are therefore the acts of God." This is the popular argument by which their crimes are justified.

The doctrine of one supreme, all-wise, and uncontrollable Providence, commends itself to our reason as one of the noblest and most supporting of truths; but we are not to overlook the source from whence even those draw it, who think the reason of man equal to its full developement. So far were pagans from being able to conceive so lofty a thought, that the wisest of them invented subordinate agents to carry on the affairs of the world; beings often divided among themselves, and subject to human passions; thereby destroying the doctrine of providence, and taking away the very foundation of human trust in a Supreme Power. This invention of subordinate deities gave birth to idolatry, which is sufficiently in proof both of its extent and antiquity.

The beautiful and well-sustained series of arguments which have often in modern times been brought to support the presumption "that the human soul is immortal," may be read with profit; but it is not to be accounted for, that those who *profess* to confine themselves to human reason in the inquiry, should argue with so much greater strength than the philosophers of ancient times, except that they have received assistance from a source which they are unfair enough not to acknowledge. Some fine passages on this subject may be collected from Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and others, but we must take them with others which express, sometimes doubt, and sometimes unbelief. With us this is a matter of general belief; but not so with the generality of either ancient or modern pagans. The same darkness which obscured the glory of God, proportionably diminished the glory of man,—his true and proper immortality. The very ancient notion of an absorption of souls back again into the Divine Essence was with the ancients, what we know it to be now in the metaphysical system of the Hindoos, a denial of *individual* immortality; nor have the demonstrations of reason done any thing to convince the other grand division of metaphysical pagans into which modern heathenism is divided, the followers of Budhu, who believe in the total annihilation of both men and gods after a series of ages,—a point of faith held probably by the majority of the present race of mankind. (1)

(1) "The religion of Budhu," says Dr. Davy, "is more widely extended than any other religion. It appears to be the religion of the whole of Tartary, of China, of Japan, and their dependencies, and of all the countries between China and the Burrampooter.

"The Budhists do not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, self existent and eternal, the creator and preserver of the universe: indeed, it is doubtful if they believe in the existence and operation of any cause beside fate and necessity, to which they seem to refer all changes in the moral and physical world. They appear to be Materialists in the strictest sense of the term, and to have no notion of pure spirit or mind. *Prane* and *hitts*, life and intelligence, the most learned

These instances might be enlarged; but they amply show that they who speak of the sufficiency of human reason in matters of morals and religion neglect almost all the facts which the history of human opinion furnishes; and that they owe all their best views to that fountain of inspiration from which they so criminally turn aside. For how otherwise can the instances we have just mentioned be explained? and how is it, that those fundamental principles in morals and religion, which modern philosophers have exhibited as demonstrable by the unassisted powers of the human mind, were either held doubtfully, or connected with some manifest absurdity, or utterly denied by the wisest moral teachers among the Gentiles, who lived before the Christian revelation was given? They had the same works of God to behold, and the same course of providence to reason from, to neither of which were they inattentive. They had intellectual endowments, which have been the admiration of all subsequent ages; and their reason was rendered acute and discriminative by the discipline of mathematical and dialectic science. They had every thing which the moderns have *except the* BIBLE; and yet on points which have been generally settled among the moral philosophers of our own age as fundamental to natural religion, they had no just views, and no settled conviction. "The various apprehensions of wise men," says Cicero, "will justify the doubtings and demurs of skeptics, and it will then be sufficient to blame them, *si aut consenserint alii, aut erit inventus aliquis, qui quid verum sit invenerit*, when others agree, or any one has found out the truth. We say not that nothing is true; but that some false things are annexed to all that is true, *tanta similitudine ut iis nulla sit certa judicandi, et assentiendi nota*, and that, with so much likeness, that there is no certain note of judging what is true, or assenting to it. We deny not that something may be true; *percipi posse negamus*, but we deny that it can be perceived so to be; for *quid habemus in rebus bonis et malis explorati*, what have we certain concerning good and evil? Nor for this are WE to be blamed, but NATURE, which has hidden the truth in the deep, *naturam accusa*

of them appear to consider identical:—seated in the heart, radiating from thence to different parts of the body, like heat from a fire;—uncreated, without beginning, at least that they know of;—capable of being modified by a variety of circumstances, like the breath in different musical instruments;—and like a vapour, capable of passing from one body to another;—and like a flame, liable to be extinguished and totally annihilated. Gods, demons, men, reptiles, even the minutest and most imperfect animalcules, they consider as similar beings, formed of the four elements—heat, air, water, and that which is tangible, and animated by *prane* and *hitta*. They believe that a man may become a god or a demon; or that a god may become a man or an animalcule; that ordinary death is merely a change of form; and that this change is almost infinite, and bounded only by annihilation, which they esteem the acme of happiness!" (*Account of Ceylon.*)

quæ in profundo veritatem penitus abstruserit." (*Vide De Nat. Deorum*, lib. 1, n. 10, 11. *Acad. Qu.* lib. 2, n. 66, 120.)

On this subject Dr. Samuel Clarke, though so great an advocate of natural religion, concedes, that "of the philosophers, some argued themselves out of the belief of the very being of a God; some by ascribing all things to chance, others to absolute fatality, equally subverted all true notions of religions, and made the doctrine of *the resurrection of the dead*, and *a future judgment* needless and impossible. Some professed open immorality, others by subtle distinctions patronized particular vices. The better sort of them, who were most celebrated, discoursed with the greatest reason, yet with much uncertainty and doubtfulness, concerning things of the highest importance,—*the providence of God in governing the world, the immortality of the soul, and a future judgment.*"

If such facts prove the weakness and insufficiency of human reason, those just thoughts respecting God, his providence, his will, and a future state, which sometimes appear in the writings of the wisest heathen, are not however, on the contrary, to be attributed to its strength. Even if they were, the argument for the sufficiency of reason would not be much advanced thereby; for the case would then be, that the reason which occasionally reached the truth had not firmness enough to hold it fast, and the pinion which sometimes bore the mind into fields of light, could not maintain it in its elevation. But it cannot even be admitted, that the truth which occasionally breaks forth in their works was the discovery of their own powers. There is much evidence to show, that they were indebted to a traditional knowledge much earlier than their own day, and that moral and religious knowledge among them received occasional and important accessions from the descendants of Abraham, a people who possessed records which, laying aside the question of their inspiration for the present, all candid Theists themselves will acknowledge, contain noble and just views of God, and a correct morality. While it cannot be proved that human reason made a single discovery in either moral or religious truth; it may be satisfactorily established, that just notions as to both were placed within its reach, which it first obscured, and then corrupted.

CHAPTER V.

The Origin of those Truths which are found in the Writings and Religious Systems of the Heathen.

We have seen that some of the leading truths of religion and morals, which are adverted to by heathen writers, or assumed in heathen systems, are spoken of as truths previously known to the world, and with which mankind were familiar. Also, that no legislator, poet, or philoso-

pher of antiquity, ever pretended to the *discovery* of the doctrines of the existence of a God, of providence, a future state, and of the rules by which actions are determined to be good or evil, whether these opinions were held by them with full conviction of their certainty, or only doubtfully. That they were transmitted by tradition from an earlier age; or were brought from some collateral source of information; or that they flowed from both; are therefore the only rational conclusions.

To *tradition* the wisest of the heathen often acknowledge themselves indebted.

A previous age of superior truth, rectitude, and happiness, sometimes called the golden age, was a commonly received notion among them. It is at least as high as Hesiod, who rivals Homer in antiquity. It was likewise a common opinion, that sages existed in ages anterior to their own, who received knowledge from the gods, and communicated it to men. The wisest heathens, notwithstanding the many great things said of nature and reason, derive the origin, obligation, and efficacy of *law* from the gods alone. "No mortal," says Plato in his republic, "can make laws to purpose." Demosthenes calls law ευρημα και δωρον Θεϱ, "the invention and gift of God." They speak of νομοι αγραφοι, "unwritten laws," and ascribe both them, and the laws which were introduced by their various legislators, to the gods. Xenophon represents it as the opinion of Socrates, that the unwritten laws received over the whole earth, which it was impossible that all mankind, as being of different languages, and not to be assembled in one place, should make, were given by the gods. (2) Plato is express on this subject: "After a certain

(2) Xen. Mem. lib. 4, cap. 4, sect. 19, 20.—To the same effect is that noble passage of Cicero cited by Lactantius out of his work *De Republica*.

"Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando, a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet, aut vetat; nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec abrogari fas est; nec derogari ex hac aliquid licet; neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per senatum, aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus; neque est quærendus explanator, aut interpres ejus alius. Nec enim alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium Deus, ille legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur; atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiamsi cætera supplicia, quæ putantur, effugerit:"—From which it is clear that Cicero acknowledged a law antecedent to all human civil institutions, and independent of them, binding upon all, constant and perpetual, the same in all times and places, not one thing at Rome, and another at Athens; of an authority so high, that no human power had the right to alter or annul it; having God for its author, in his character of universal Master and Sovereign; taking hold of the very consciences of men, and following them with its animadversions, though they should escape the hand of man, and the penalties of human codes.

flood, which but few escaped, on the increase of mankind, they had neither letters, writing, nor laws, but obeyed the manners and institutions of their fathers as laws: but when colonies separated from them, they took an elder for their leader, and in their new settlements retained the customs of their ancestors, *those especially which related to their gods: and thus transmitted them to their posterity; they imprinted them on the minds of their sons; and they did the same to their children.* This was the origin of right laws, and of the different forms of government." (*De Leg.* 3.)

This so exactly harmonizes with the Mosaic account, as to the flood of Noah, the origin of nations, and the Divine institution of religion and laws, that either the patriarchal traditions embodied in the writings of Moses, had gone down with great exactness to the times of Plato; or the writings of Moses were known to him; or he had gathered the substance of them, in his travels, from the Egyptian, the Chaldean, or the Magian philosophers.

Nor is this an unsupported hypothesis. The evidence is most abundant, that the primitive source from whence every great religious and moral truth was drawn, must be fixed in that part of the world where Moses places the dwelling of the patriarchs of the human race, who walked with God, and received the law from his mouth. (3) There, in the earliest times, civilization and polity were found, while the rest of the earth was covered with savage tribes,—a sufficient proof that Asia was the common centre from whence the rest of mankind dispersed, who, as they wandered from these primitive seats, and addicted themselves more to the chase than to agriculture, became in most instances barbarous. (4)

In the multifarious and bewildering superstitions of all nations, we also discover a very remarkable substratum of common tradition and religious faith.

The practice of sacrifice, which may at once be traced into all nations and to the remotest antiquity, affords an eminent proof of the common

(3) "The east was the source of knowledge from whence it was communicated to the western parts of the world. There the most precious remains of ancient tradition were found. Thither the most celebrated Greek philosophers travelled in quest of science, or the knowledge of things Divine and human, and thither the lawgivers had recourse in order to their being instructed in laws and civil policy." (LELAND.)

(4) The speculations of infidels as to the gradual progress of the original men from the savage life, and the *invention* of language, arts, laws, &c, have been too much countenanced by philosophers bearing the name of Christ; some of them even holding the office of teachers of his religion. The writings of Moses sufficiently show that there never was a period in which the original tribes of men were in a savage state; and the gradual process of the developement of a higher condition is a chimera. To those who profess to believe the Scriptures, their testimony ought to be sufficient: to those who do not, they are at least as good history as any other

origin of religion; inasmuch as no reason drawn from the nature of the rite itself, or the circumstances of men, can be given for the universality of the practice: and as it is clearly a positive institute, and opposed to the interests of men, it can only be accounted for by an *injunction*, issued at a very early period of the world, and solemnly imposed. This injunction, indeed, received a force, either from its original appointment, or from subsequent circumstances, from which the human mind could never free itself. "There continued," says Dr. Shuckford, "for a long time among the nations usages which show that there had been an ancient universal religion; several traces of which appeared in the rites and ceremonies which were observed in religious worship. Such was the custom of sacrifices expiatory and precatory; both the sacrifices of animals, and the oblations of wine, oil, and the fruits and products of the earth. These and other things which were in use among the patriarchs, obtained also among the Gentiles."

The events, and some of the leading opinions of the earliest ages, mentioned in Scripture, may also be traced among the most barbarous, as well as in the Oriental, the Grecian, and the Roman systems of mythology. Such are the FORMATION OF THE WORLD; the FALL AND CORRUPTION OF MAN; the hostility of a powerful and supernatural agent of wickedness, under his appropriate and Scriptural emblem, the SERPENT; the DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD BY WATER; the REPEOPLING OF IT BY THE SONS OF NOAH; the EXPECTATION OF ITS FINAL DESTRUCTION BY FIRE; and, above all, the *promise of a great and Divine* DELIVERER. (5)

The only method of accounting for this, is, that the same traditions were transmitted from the progenitors of the different families of mankind after the flood; that in some places they were strengthened, and the impressions deepened by successive revelations, which assumed the first traditions, as being of Divine original, for their basis, and thus renewed the knowledge which had formerly been communicated, at the very time they enlarged it: and farther, that from the written revelations which were afterward made to one people, some rays of reflected light were constantly glancing upon the surrounding nations.

Nor are we at a loss to trace this communication of truth from a common source to the Gentile nations; and also to show that they actually did receive accessions of information, both directly and indirectly, from a people who retained the primitive theological system in its greatest purity.

We shall see sufficient reasons, when we come to speak on that subject, to conclude that all mankind have descended from one common pair.

If man is now a moral agent, the first man must be allowed to have been a moral agent; and, as such, under rules of obedience; in which

(5) See note A at the end of this chapter

rules it is far more probable that he should be instructed by his Maker by means of direct communication, than that he should be left to collect the will of his Maker from observation and experience. Those who deny the Scripture account of the introduction of death into the world, and think the human species were always liable to it, are bound to admit a revelation from God to the first pair as to the wholesomeness of certain fruits, and the destructive habits of certain animals, or our first progenitors would have been far more exposed to danger from delete rious fruits, &c, and in a more miserable condition through their fears than any of their descendants, because they were without experience, and could have no information. (6) But it is far more probable, that they should have express information as to the will of God concerning their *conduct;* for until they had settled, by a course of rational induction, what was right, and what wrong, they could not, properly speaking, be moral agents; and, from the difficulties of such an inquiry, especially until they had had a long experience of the steady course of nature, and the effect of certain actions upon themselves and society, they might possibly arrive at very different conclusions. (7)

But in whatever way the moral and religious knowledge of the first man was obtained, if he is allowed to have been under an efficient law, he must at least have known, in order to the right regulation of himself, every truth essential to religion, and to personal, domestic, and social morals. The truth on these subjects was as essential to him as to his descendants, and more especially because he was so soon to be the head and the paternal governor, by a natural relation, of a numerous race, and to possess, by virtue of that office, great influence over them. If we assume, therefore, that the knowledge of the first man was taught to his children, and it were the greatest absurdity to suppose the contrary, then, whether he received his information on the principal doctrines of religion, and the principal rules of morals, by express revelation from God, or by the exercise of his own natural powers, all the great principles of religion, and of personal, domestic, and social morals, must have been at *once* communicated to his children, immediately descending from him; and we clearly enough see the reason why the earliest writers on these subjects never pretend to have been the discoverers of the leading truths of morals and religion, but speak of them as opinions familiar to men, and generally received. This primitive religious and moral system, as far as regards first principles, and all their important particular applications, was also complete, or there had been neither efficient religion nor morality in the first ages, which is contrary to all tradition, and

(6) See DELANEY'S Revelation Examined with Candour, Dissertations 1 and 2.

(7) "It is very probable," says Puffendorf, "that God taught the first men the chief heads of natural law."

to all history; and that this system was actually transmitted, is clear from this, that the wisdom of very early ages consisted not so much in natural and speculative science, as in moral notions, rules of conduct, and an acquaintance with the opinions of the wise of still earlier periods.

The few persons through whom this system was transmitted to Noah, for in fact Methuselah was contemporary both with Adam and Noah, rendered any great corruption impossible; and therefore the crimes charged upon the antediluvians are *violence* and other immoralities, rather than *the corruption of truth*; and Noah was "a preacher of *righteousness*," rather than a restorer of doctrine.

The flood, (8) being so awful and marked a declaration of God's anger against the violation of the laws of this primitive religion, would give great force and sanction to it, as a religious system, in the minds of Noah's immediate descendants. The existence of God; his providence; his favour to the good his anger against evil doers; the great rules of justice and mercy; the practice of a sacrificial worship; the observance of the Sabbath, the promise of a Deliverer, and other similar tenets, were among the articles and religious rites of this primitive system: nor can any satisfactory account be given, why they were transmitted to so many people, in different parts of the world; why they have continued to glimmer through the darkness of paganism to this day; why we find them more or less recognized in the mythology, traditions, and customs of almost all ages ancient and modern, except that they received some original *sanction* of great efficacy, deeply fixing them in the hearts of the patriarchs of all the families of men. Those who deny the revelations contained in the Scriptures, have no means of accounting for these facts, which in themselves are indisputable. They have no theory respecting them which is not too childish to deserve serious refutation, and they usually prefer to pass them over in silence. But the believer in the Bible can account for them, and he alone. The destruction of wicked men by the flood put the *seal of Heaven* upon the religious system transmitted from Adam; and under the force of this Divine and unequivocal attestation of its truth, the sons and descendants of Noah went forth into their different settlements, bearing for ages the deep impression of its sanctity and authority. The impres-

(8) Whatever may be thought respecting the circumstances of the *flood* as mentioned by Moses, there is nothing in that event, considered as the punishment of a guilty race, and as giving an attestation of God's approbation of right principles and a right conduct, to which a consistent Theist can object. For if the will of God is to be collected from observing the course of nature and providence, such signal and remarkable events in his government as the deluge, whether universal or only co-extensive with the existing race of men, may be expected to occur; and especially when an almost universal punishment, as connected with an almost universal wickedness, so strikingly indicated an observant and a righteous government.

sion, it is true, at length gave way to vice, superstition, and false philosophy; but superstition perverted truth rather than displaced it; and the doctrines, the history, and even the hopes of the first ages, were never entirely banished even from those fables which became baleful substitutes for their simplicity.

In the family of Abraham the true God was acknowledged. Melchizedec was the sovereign of one of the nations of Canaan, and priest of the most high God, and his subjects must therefore have been worshippers of the true Divinity. Abimelech the Philistine and his people, both in Abraham's days and in Isaac's, were also worshippers of Jehovah. and acknowledged the same moral principles which were held sacred in the elect family. The revelations and promises made to Abraham would enlarge the boundaries of religious knowledge, both among the descendants of Ishmael, and those of his sons by Keturah; as those made to Shem would, with the patriarchal theology, be transmitted to his posterity—the Persians, Assyrians, and Mesopotamians. (9) In Egypt, even in the days of Joseph, he and the king of Egypt speak of the true GOD, as of a being mutually known and acknowledged. Upon the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan, they found a few persons in that perhaps primitive seat of idolatry, who acknowledged "*Jehovah to be God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath.*" Through the branch of Esau the knowledge of the true religion would pass from the family of Isaac, with its farther illustrations in the covenants made with Abraham, to his descendants. Job and his friends, who probably lived between Abraham and Moses, were professors of the patriarchal religion · and their discourses show, that it was both a sublime and a comprehen sive system. The plagues of Egypt and the miraculous escape of the Israelites, and the destruction of the Canaanitish nations, were all parts of an awful controversy between the true God and the idolatry spreading in the world; and could not fail of being largely noised abroad among the neighbouring nations, and of making the religion of the Israelites known. (JENKIN'S *Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. i, chap. 2.) Balaam, a Gentile prophet, intermixes with his predictions many brief but eloquent assertions of the first principles of religion; the omnipotence of Deity, his universal providence, and the immutability of his counsels; and the names and epithets which he applies to the Supreme Being, are, as Bishop Horsley observes, the very same which are used by Moses, Job, and the inspired writers of the Jews, namely, *God*, the *Almighty*, the *Most High*, and *Jehovah;* which is a proof, that, gross as the corruptions of idolatry were now become, the patriarchal religion was not forgotten nor its language become obsolete.

(9) See Bishop HORSLEY'S Dissertations before referred to; and LELAND'S View of the Necessity of Revelation, part i, chap. 2.

The frequent and public restorations of the Israelites to the principles of the patriarchal religion, after they had lapsed into idolatry, and fallen under the power of other nations, could not fail to make their peculiar opinions known among those with whom they were so often in relations of amity or war, of slavery or dominion. We have evidence collateral to that of the Scriptures, that the building of the celebrated temple of Solomon, and the fame of the wisdom of that monarch, produced not only a wide-spread rumour, but, as it was intended by Divine wisdom and goodness, *moral effects* upon the people of distant nations, and that the Abyssinians received the Jewish religion after the visit of the queen of Sheba, the principles of that religion being probably found to accord with those ancient traditions of the patriarchs, which remained among them. (1) The intercourse between the Jews and the states of Syria and Babylon on the one hand, and Egypt on the other, powers which rose to great eminence and influence in the ancient world, was maintained for many ages. Their frequent captivities and dispersions would tend to preserve in part, and in part to revive, the knowledge of the once common and universal faith; for we have instances, that in the worst periods of their history there were among the captive Israelites those who adhered with heroic steadfastness to their own religion. We have the instance of the female captive in the house of Naaman the Syrian, and, at a later period, the sublime example of the three Hebrew youths, and of Daniel in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. The decree of this prince, after the deliverance of Shadrach and his companions, ought not to be slightly passed over. It contained a public proclamation of the supremacy of Jehovah, in opposition to the gods of his country; and that monarch, after his recovery from a singular disease, became himself a worshipper of the true God; both of which are circumstances which could not but excite attention, among a learned and curious people, to the religious tenets of the Jews. We may add to this also, that great numbers of the Jews preserving their Scriptures, and publicly worshipping the true God, never returned from the Babylonish captivity; but remained in various parts of that extensive empire after it was con-

(1) The princes of Abyssinia claim descent from Menilek, the son of Solomon by the queen of Sheba. The Abyssinians say she was converted to the Jewish religion. The succession is hereditary in the line of Solomon, and the device of their kings is a lion passant, proper upon a field gules, and their motto, "The lion of the race of Solomon and tribe of Judah hath overcome." The Abyssinian eunuch who was met by Philip was not properly a Jewish proselyte, but an Abyssinian believer in Moses and the prophets. Christianity spread in this country at an early period; but many of the inhabitants to this day are of the Jewish religion. Tyre also must have derived an accession of religious information from its intercourse with the Israelites in the time of Solomon, and we find Hiram the king blessing the Lord God of Israel "as the Maker of heaven and earth."

quered by the Persians. The Chaldean philosophic schools, to which many of the Greek sages resorted for instruction, were therefore never without the means of acquaintance with the theological system of the Jews, however degenerate in process of time their wise men became, by addicting themselves to judicial astrology; and to the same sacred source the conquest of Babylon conducted the Persians.

Cyrus, the celebrated subverter of the Babylonian monarchy, was of the Magian religion, whose votaries worshipped God under the emblem of fire, but held an independent and eternal principle of darkness and evil. He was, however, somewhat prepared by his hostility to idols, to listen to the tenets of the Jews; and his favour to them sufficiently shows, that the influence which Daniel's character, the remarkable facts which had occurred respecting him at the courts of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and the predictions of his own success by Isaiah, had exerted on his mind, was very great. In his decree for the rebuilding of the temple, recorded in Ezra, chap. i, and 2 Chron. xxxvi, 23, he acknowledges "*Jehovah to be the God of heaven*," who had given him his kingdom, and had charged him to rebuild the temple. Nor could this testimony in favour of the God of the Jews be without effect upon his subjects; one proof of which, and of the influence of Judaism upon the Persians, is, that in a short time after his reign, a considerable improvement in some particulars, and alteration in others, took place in the Magian religion by an evident admixture with it of the tenets and ceremonies of the Jews. (2) And whatever improvements the theology of the Persians thus received, and they were not few nor unimportant; whatever information they acquired as to the origin of the world, the events of the first ages, and questions of morals and religion, subjects after which the ancient philosophers made keen and eager inquiries; they could not but be known to the learned Greeks, whose intercourse with the Persians was continued for so long a period, and be transmitted also into that part of India into which the Persian monarchs pushed their conquests.

It is indeed unquestionable, that the credit in which the Jews stood, in the Persian empire; the singular events which brought them into notice with the Persian monarchs; the favour they afterward experienced from Alexander the Great and his successors, who reigned in Egypt, where they became so numerous, and so generally spoke the Greek, that a translation of the Scriptures into that language was rendered necessary; and their having in most of the principal cities of the Roman empire, even when most extended, indeed in all the cities which were celebrated for refinement and philosophy, their synagogues and public worship, in Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, at Athens, Corinth.

(2) See note B at the end of this chapter

Ephesus, &c, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and that for a long time before the Christian era,—rendered their tenets very widely known: and as these events took place after *their final reformation from idolatry*, the opinions by which they were distinguished were those substantially which are taught in the Scriptures. The above statements, to say nothing of the fact, that the character, office, opinions, and writings of Moses were known to many of the ancient philosophers and historians, who mention him by name, and describe the religion of the Jews, are sufficient to account for those opinions and traditions we occasionally meet with in the writings of the Greek and Roman sages which have the greatest correspondence with truth, and agree best with the Holy Scriptures. They flowed in upon them from many channels, branching out at different times from the fountain of truth; but they were received by them generally as mere traditions or philosophic notions, which they thought themselves at liberty to adopt, reject, modify, or pervert, as the principles of their schools or their own fancy led them.

Let then every question which respects inspiration, miracles, prophecies, be for the present omitted: the following conclusions may properly close these observations:—

1. That as a history of early opinions and events, the Scriptures have at least as much authority as any history of ancient times whatever; nay, the very idea of their sacredness, whether well founded or not, renders their historical details more worthy of credit, because that idea led to their more careful preservation.

2. That their history is often confirmed by ancient pagan traditions and histories; and in no material point, or on any good evidence, contradicted.

3. That those fundamental principles of what is called natural religion, which are held by sober Theists, and by them denominated *rational*, the discovery of which they attribute to the unassisted understanding of man, are to be found in the earliest of these sacred writings, and are there supposed to have existed in the world previous to the date of those writings themselves.

4. That a religion founded on common notions and common traditions, comprehensive both in doctrines and morals, existed in very early periods of the world; and that from the agreement of almost all mythological systems, in certain doctrines, rites, and traditions, it is reasonable to believe, that this primitive theology passed in some degree into all nations.

5. That it was retained most perfectly among those of the descendants of Abraham who formed the Israelitish state, and subsisted as a nation collaterally with the successive great empires of antiquity for many ages.

6. That the frequent dispersions of great numbers of that people, either by war or from choice, and their residence in or near the seats

of ancient learning with their sacred books, and in the habit of observing their public worship, as in Chaldea, Egypt, Persia, and other parts of the ancient world, and the signal notice into which they and their opinions were occasionally brought, could not but make their cosmogony, theology, laws, and history, very extensively known.

7. That the spirit of inquiry in many of the ancient philosophers of different countries, led them to travel for information on these very subjects, and often into those countries where the patriarchal religion had formerly existed in great purity, and where the tenets of the Jews, which tended to revive or restore it, were well known.

8. That there is sufficient evidence that these tenets were in fact known to many of the sages of the greatest name, and to schools of the greatest influence, who, however, regarding them only as traditions or philosophical opinions, interwove such of them as best agreed with their views into their own systems, and rejected or refined upon others, so that no permanent and convincing system of morals and religion was, after all, wrought out among themselves, while they left the populace generally to the gross ignorance and idolatry in which they were involved. (3)

(3) The readiness of the philosophers of antiquity to seize upon every notion which could aid them in their speculations, is manifest by the use which those of them who lived when Christianity began to be known, and to acquire credit, made of its discoveries to give greater splendour to their own systems. The thirst of knowledge carried the ancient sages to the most distant persons and places in search of wisdom, nor did the later philosophers any more than modern infidels neglect the superior light of Christianity, when brought to their own doors, but they were equally backward to acknowledge the obligation. "*As the ancients,*" says Justin Martyr, "*had borrowed from the prophets, so did the moderns from the Gospel.*" Tertullian observes in his Apology, "*Which of your poets, which of your sophists, have not drunk from the fountains of the prophets? It is from these sacred sources likewise that your philosophers have refreshed their thirsty spirits; and if they found any thing in the Holy Scriptures to please their fancy, or to serve their hypotheses, they turned it to their own purpose, and made it serve their curiosity; not considering these writings to be sacred and unalterable, nor understanding their sense; every one taking or leaving, adopting or remodelling, as his imagination led him. Nor do I wonder that the philosophers played such foul tricks with the Old Testament, when I find some of the same generation among ourselves who have made as bold with the New, and composed a deadly mixture of Gospel and opinion, led by a philosophizing vanity.*"

It was from conversing with a Christian that Epictetus learned to reform the doctrine, and abase the pride of the Stoics; nor is it to be imagined that Marcus Antoninus, Maximus Tyrius, and others, were ignorant of the Christian doctrine.

Rousseau admits, that the modern philosopher derives his better notions on many subjects from those very Scriptures, which he reviles; from the early impressions of education; from living and conversing in a Christian country, where those doctrines are publicly taught, and where, in spite of himself, he imbibes some portion of that religious knowledge which the sacred writings have every where diffused. (*Works*, vol. ix, p. 71; 1764.)

9. Finally, that so far from there being any evidence that any of those fundamental truths of religion or morals, which may occasionally appear in their writings, were discovered by their unassisted reason, we can trace them to an earlier age, and can show that they had the means of access to higher sources of information; while on the other hand it may be exhibited as a proof of the weakness of the human mind, and the corruptness of the human heart, that they generally involved in doubt the great principles which they thus received; built upon them fanciful systems destructive of their moral efficacy; and mixed them with errors of the most deteriorating character. (4)

The last observation will be more fully illustrated in the ensuing chapter.

(4) See note C at the end of this chapter.

Note A.—Page 27.

The illustration of the particulars mentioned in the paragraph, from which reference is made to this note, may be given under different heads.

The Formation of the World from Chaotic Matter.—Some remains of the sentiments of the ancient Chaldeans are preserved in the pages of *Syncellus* from Berosus and Alexander Polyhistor; and when the tradition is divested of its fabulous dress, we may trace in the account a primordial watery chaos, a separation of the darkness from light, and of earth from heaven, the production of man from the dust of the earth, and an infusion of Divine reason into the man so formed.—The cosmogony of the Phenicians, as detailed by *Sanchoniatho*, makes the principle of the universe a dark air, and a turbulent chaos. The ancient Persians taught that God created the world at six different times, in manifest allusion to the six days' work as described by Moses. In the Institutes of *Menu*, a Hindoo tract, supposed by Sir William Jones to have been composed 1280 years before the Christian era, the universe is represented as involved in darkness, when the sole, self-existing power, himself undiscerned, made the world discernible. With a thought he first created the waters, which are called *Nara*, or the Spirit of God; and since they were his first *ayana*, or place of motion, he is thence named *Narayana*, or moving on the waters. The order of the creation in the ancient traditions of the Chinese is,—the heavens were first formed; the foundations of the earth were next laid; the atmosphere was then diffused round the habitable globe, and last of all, man was created. The formation of the world from chaos may be discovered in the traditions of our Gothic ancestors.—See the *Edda*, and Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i, page 3.

In the ancient Greek philosophy we trace the same tradition, and Plato clearly borrowed the materials of his account of the origin of things, either from Moses, or from traditions which had proceeded from the same source. Moses speaks of God in the plural form, "*In the beginning Gods created the heaven and the earth*," and Plato has a kind of trinity in his το αγαθον, "the good," νους or "intellect," who was properly the *demiurgus*, or former of the world, and his *Psyche*, or universal mundane soul, the cause of all the motion which is in the world. He also repre sents the first matter out of which the universe was formed as a rude chaos. In

the Greek and Latin poets we have frequent allusions to the same fact, and in some of them highly poetic descriptions of the chaotic state of the world, and its reduction to order. When America was discovered, traditions, bearing a very remarkable resemblance to the history of Moses on various subjects, were found among the semi-civilized nations of that continent. *Gomara* states in his history, that the Peruvians believed that, at the beginning of the world, there came from the north a being named *Con*, who levelled mountains and raised hills solely by the word of his mouth; that he filled the earth with men and women whom he had created, giving them fruits and bread, and all things necessary for their subsistence; but that, being offended with their transgressions, he deprived them of the blessings which they had originally enjoyed, and afflicted their lands with sterility.

"The number of days employed in the work of creation," says Mr. Faber "and the Divine rest on the seventh day, produced that peculiar measure of time, the week, which is purely arbitrary, and which does not spring, like a day, or a month, or a year, from the natural motions of the heavenly bodies. Hence the general adoption of the hebdomadal period is itself a proof how widely a knowledge of the true cosmogonical system was diffused among the posterity of Noah." Thus, in almost every part of the globe, from Europe to the shores of India, and anciently among the Greeks, Romans, and Goths, as well as among the Jews, we find the week used as a familiar measure of time, and some traces of the Sabbath.

THE FALL OF MAN.—That the human race were once innocent and happy, is an opinion of high antiquity, and great extent among the Gentile nations. The passages to this effect in the classical poets are well known. It is asserted in the *Edda*, the record of the opinions of our Scythian forefathers. "There can be little doubt," says Maurice, in his History of Hindostan, "but that by the Satya-age, or age of perfection, the Brachmins obscurely allude to the state of perfection and happiness enjoyed by man in paradise. Then justice, truth, philanthropy, were practised among all the orders and classes of mankind." That man is a fallen creature, is now the universal belief of this class of pagans; and the degeneracy of the human soul, its *native* and *hereditary* degeneracy, runs through much of the Greek philosophy. The immediate occasion of the fall, the frailty of the woman, we find also alluded to equally in classical fable, in ancient Gothic traditions, and among various barbarous tribes. A curious passage to this effect occurs in Campbell's Travels among the Boschuana Hottentots.

THE SERPENT.—The agency of an evil and malignant spirit is found also in these widely-extended ancient traditions. Little doubt can be entertained but that the generally received notion of good and evil demons grounded itself upon the Scripture account of good and evil angels. *Serpent worship* was exceedingly general, especially in Egypt and the east, and this is not to be accounted for but as it originated from a superstitious fear of the malignant demon, who, under that animal form, brought death into the world, and obtained a destructive dominion over men. That in ancient sculptures and paintings, the serpent symbol is sometimes emblematical of wisdom, eternity, and other moral ideas, may be allowed; but it often appears connected with representations which prove that under this form the evil principle was worshipped, and that human sacrifices were offered to gratify the cruelty of him who was a "murderer from the beginning." In the model of the tomb of *Psammis*, made by Mr. Belzoni, and recently exhibited in London, and in the plates which accompany his work on Egypt, are seen various representations of monstrous serpents with the tribute of human heads which had been offered to them. This is still more strikingly exemplified in a copy of part of the interior of an Egyptian tomb at *Biban al Melook* in

Richardson's Travels in Egypt. Before an enormous serpent three men are represented on their knees, with their heads just struck off by the executioner, "while the serpent erects his crest to a level with their throats, ready to drink the stream of life as it gurgles from their veins." This was probably the serpent Typhon, of the ancient Egyptians; the same as the Python of the Greeks; and as observed by Mr. Faber, "the notion that the Python was oracular, may have sprung from a recollection of the vocal responses, which the tempter gave to Eve under the borrowed figure of that reptile." By consulting Moore's Hindu Pantheon, it will be seen that the serpent Caliya is represented as the decided enemy of the mediatorial God, Krishna, whom he persecutes, and on whom he inflicts various sufferings, though he is at length vanquished. Krishna, pressed within the folds of the serpent, and then triumphing over him in bruising his head beneath his feet, is the subject of a very ancient Hindoo bas relief, and carries with it its own interpretation.

In the *Edda*, Fab. 16, "the great serpent is said to be an emanation from *Loke*, the evil principle; and *hela*, or hell or death, in a poetical vein of allegory not unworthy of our own Milton, is celebrated as the daughter of that personage, and as the sister of the dragon. Indignant at the pertinacious rebellion of the evil principle, the universal Father despatched certain of the gods to bring those children to him. When they were come, he threw the serpent down to the bottom of the ocean. But there the monster grew so large, that he wound himself round the whole globe of the earth. Death meanwhile was precipitated into hell, where she possesses vast apartments, strongly built, and fenced with grates of iron. Her hall is *grief;* her table *famine; hunger*, her knife; *delay*, her servant; *faintness*, her porch; *sickness* and *pain*, her bed; and her tent, *cursing* and *howling*."

THE FLOOD OF NOAH.—Josephus, in his first book against Apion, states that *Berosus* the Chaldean historian relates, in a similar manner to Moses, the history of the flood, and the preservation of Noah in an ark or chest. In Abydemis's History of Assyria, in passages quoted by Eusebius, mention is made of an ancient prince of the name of *Sisithrus*, who was forewarned by Saturn of a deluge. In this account, the ship, the sending forth and returning of the birds, the abating of the waters, and the resting of the ship on a mountain, are all mentioned. (Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. 9, c. 12.—Grotius on the Christian Religion, lib. 1, sec. 16.) Lucian, in his book concerning the goddess of Syria, mentions the Syrian traditions as to this event. Here Noah is called Deucalion, and that he was the person intended under this name is rendered indubitable by the mention of the wickedness of the antediluvians, the piety of Deucalion, the ark, and the bringing into it of the beasts of the earth by pairs. The ancient Persian traditions, as Dr. Hyde has shown, though mixed with fable, have a substantial agreement with the Mosaic account. In Hindostan, the ancient poem of *Bhagavot* treats of a flood which destroyed all mankind, except a pious prince, with seven of his attendants and their wives. The Chinese writers in like manner make mention of a universal flood. In the legends of the ancient Egyptians, Goths, and Druids, striking references are made to the same event; (*Edda*, Fab. 4; Davies's Mythology of the British Druids, p. 226,) and it was found represented in the historical paintings of the Mexicans, and among the American nations. The natives of Otaheite believed that the world was torn in pieces formerly by the anger of their gods; the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands have a tradition that the Etooa, who created the world, afterward destroyed it by an inundation; and recollections of the same event are preserved among the New Zealanders, as the author had the opportunity of ascertaining

lately in a conversation with two of their chiefs, through an interpreter. For large illustrations of this point, see *Bryant's Heathen Mythology*, and *Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ*.

Sacrifice.—The great principle of the three dispensations of religion in the Scriptures,—The Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian,—that *without shedding of blood there is no remission*, has fixed itself in every pagan religion of ancient and modern times. For though the followers of Budhu are forbidden to offer sanguinary sacrifices to him, they offer them to demons in order to avert various evils; and their presentation of flowers and fruits to Budhu himself shows that one part of the original rite of sacrifice has been retained, though the other, through a philosophic refinement, is given up. Sacrifices are, however, offered in China, where the most ancient form of Budhuism generally prevails; a presumption that the Budhuism of Ceylon, and some parts of India, is a refinement upon a more ancient system. "That the practice of devoting piacular victims has, at one period or another, prevailed in every quarter of the globe; and that it has been alike adopted by the most barbarous and by the most civilized nations, can scarcely be said to need regular and formal proof."

Expectation of a Deliverer.—Amidst the miseries of succeeding ages, the ancient pagan world was always looking forward to the appearance of a great Deliverer and Restorer, and this expectation was so general, that it is impossible to account for it but from "the promises made unto the fathers,"-beginning with the promise of conquest to the seed of the woman over the power of the serpent. It is a singular fact, and still worthy of remark, though so often stated, that, a little before our Lord's advent, an expectation of the speedy appearance of this Deliverer was general among the nations of antiquity. "The fact," says Bishop Horsely, "is so notorious to all who have any knowledge of antiquity, that if any one would deny it, I would decline all dispute with such an adversary, as too ignorant to receive conviction, or too disingenuous to acknowledge what he must secretly admit." It is another singular fact, that Virgil, in his *Pollio*, by an application of the Sybilline verses, which are almost literally in the high and glowing strains in which Isaiah prophesies of Christ, to a child of his friend, one of the Roman consuls, whose birth was just expected, and that out of an extravagant flattery, should call the attention of the world to those singular and mysterious books, so shortly before the birth of him who alone could fulfil the prophecies they contain. For a farther account of the Sybilline verses, the reader is referred to Prideaux's Connection, to Bishop Lowth's Dissertations, and to Bishop Horsley's Dissertation on the Prophecies of the Messiah, dispersed among the heathen. It is enough here to say, that it is a historical fact, that the Sybilline books existed among the Romans from an early period;—that these oracles of the Cumæan Sybil were held in such veneration, that the book which contained them was deposited in a stone chest in the temple of Jupiter, in the capitol, and committed to the care of two persons appointed to that office expressly;—that about a century before our Saviour's birth, the book was destroyed in the fire which consumed the temple in which it was deposited;—that the Roman Senate knew that similar oracles existed among other nations, for to repair that loss, they sent persons to make a new collection of these oracles, in different parts of Asia, in the islands of the Archipelago, in Africa, and in Sicily, who returned with about a thousand verses, which were deposited in the place of the originals, and kept with the same care;—and that the predictions which Virgil weaves into his fourth Eclogue, of the appearance of a king whose monarchy was to be universal, and who was to bestow upon mankind the blessings he describes, were contained in them. It follows, therefore, that such predictions existed anciently among the Romans: that they were found in many other parts of Europe, and Asia, and Africa; and

that they had so marvellous an agreement with the predictions of the Jewish prophets, that either they were in part copies from them, or predictions of an inspiration equally sacred—the fragments of very ancient prophecy interwoven probably with the fables of later times. "If," as Bishop Horsley justly observes, "any illiterate persons were to hear Virgil's poem read, with the omission of a few allusions to the heathen mythology, which would not affect the general sense of it, he would without hesitation pronounce it to be a prophecy of the Messiah." It might seem indeed that the poet had only in many passages translated Isaiah, did he not expressly attribute the predictions he has introduced into his poem to the Cumæan Sybil; which he would not have done if such passages had not been found in the oracles, because they were then in existence, and their contents were known to many. The subsequent forgeries of these oracles in the first ages of the Church, also, prove at least this, that the true Sybilline verses contained prophetic passages capable of a strong application to the true universal Deliverer, which those pious frauds aimed at making more particular and more convincing. Those who do not read Latin may consult "the Messiah" of Pope, with the principal passages from Virgil in the notes, translated and collated with prophecies from Isaiah, which will put them in possession of the substance of this singular and most interesting production.

Nor is it only on the above points that we perceive the ancient traditions and opinions preserved in their grand outline among different heathen nations, but also in the Scriptural doctrine of the destruction of the present system of material nature. The Pythagoreans, Platonists, Epicureans, Stoics, all had notions of a general conflagration. After the doctrine of the Stoics, Ovid thus speaks, Metam. lib. I.

"Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur affore tempus
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regio cœli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret."

Rememb'ring in the fates a time when fire
Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
When all his blazing worlds above should burn,
And all the' inferior globe to cinders turn. DRYDEN.

Seneca, speaking of the same event, ad Merciam c. ult., says, "*Tempus adveniet quo sidera sideribus incurrent, &c.* The time will come when the whole world will be consumed, that it may be again renewed, when the powers of nature will be turned against herself, when stars will rush on stars, and the whole material world, which now appears so resplendent with beauty and harmony, will be destroyed in one general conflagration. In this grand catastrophe of nature, all animated beings, (excepting the universal intelligence,) men, heroes, demons, and gods, shall perish together."

The same tradition presents itself in different forms in all leading systems of modern paganism.

NOTE B.—Page 32.

OF the controversy as to *Zoroaster*, *Zeratusht*, or *Zertushta*, and the sacred books said to have been written by him called *Zend*, or *Zendavesta*, which has divided critics so eminent, it would answer no important end to give an abstract. Those who wish for information on the subject are referred to HYDE'S *Religio Veterum Persarum*; PRIDEAUX'S *Connection*; WARBURTON'S *Divine Legation*;

BRYANT'S *Mythology; The Universal History;* SIR W. JONES'S *Works*, vol. iii., p. 115; M. DU PERRON, and RICHARDSON'S *Dissertation* prefixed to his Persian and Arabic Dictionary. But whatever may become of the authority of the whole or part of the Zendavesta, and with whatever fables the History of the Reformer of the Magian religion may be mixed, the learned are generally agreed that such a reformation took place by his instrumentality. "Zeratusht," says Sir W. Jones, "reformed the old religion by the addition of genii or angels, of new ceremonies in the veneration shown to fire, of a new work which he pretended to have received from heaven, and, *above all, by establishing the actual adoration of the Supreme Being*," and he farther adds, "The reformed religion of Persia continued in force till that country was conquered by the Musselmans; and, without studying the Zend, we have ample information concerning it in the modern Persian writings of several who profess it. *Bahman* always named Zeratusht with reverence; he was in truth a pure Theist, and strongly disclaimed any adoration of the fire or other elements, and he denied that the doctrine of two coeval principles, supremely good, and supremely bad, formed any part of his faith." "The Zeratusht of Persia, or the Zoroaster of the Greeks," says Richardson, "was highly celebrated by the most discerning people of ancient times; and his tenets, we are told, were most eagerly and rapidly embraced by the highest in rank, and the wisest men in the Persian empire."—*Dissertation prefixed to his Persian Dictionary.* He distinguished himself by denying that good and evil, represented by light and darkness, were coeval, independent principles, and asserted the supremacy of the true God, and exact conformity with the doctrine contained in a part of that celebrated prophecy of Isaiah, in which CYRUS is mentioned by name. "*I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me*," no coeval power. "*I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, or good, and create evil, I the Lord do all these things.*" Fire by Zerdushta appears to have been used emblematically only, and the ceremonies for preserving and transmitting it, introduced by him, were manifestly taken from the Jews, and the sacred fire of their tabernacle and temple.

The old religion of the Persians was corrupted by Sabianism, or the worship of the host of heaven, with its accompanying superstition. The Magian doctrine, whatever it might be at first, had degenerated, and two eternal principles, good and evil, had been introduced. It was therefore necessarily idolatrous also, and, like all other false systems, flattering to the vicious habits of the people. So great an improvement in the moral character and influence of the religion of a whole nation as was effected by Zoroaster, a change which is not certainly paralleled in the history of the religion of mankind, can scarcely therefore be thought possible, except we suppose a Divine interposition, either directly, or by the occurrence of some very impressive events. Now, as there are so many authorities for fixing the time of Zoroaster or Zeratusht not many years subsequent to the death of the great Cyrus, the events to which we have referred in the text are those, and indeed the only ones, which will account for his success in that reformation of religion of which he was the author: for had not the minds of men been prepared for this change by something extraordinary, it is not supposable that they would have adopted a purer faith from him. That he gave them a better doctrine is clear from the admissions of even Dean Prideaux, who has very unjustly branded him as an impostor. Let it then be remembered, that as "the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men," he often overrules great political events for *moral* purposes. The Jews were sent into captivity to Babylon to be reformed from their idolatrous propensities, and their reformation commenced with their calamity. A miracle was there wrought in favour of the

three Hebrews, confessors of one only God, and that under circumstances to put shame upon a popular idol in the presence of the king, and "*all the rulers of the provinces*," that the issue of this controversy between Jehovah and idolatry might be made known throughout that vast empire. Worship was refused to the idol by a few Hebrew captives, and the idol had no power to punish the public affront:—the servants of Jehovah were cast into a furnace, and he delivered them unhurt; and a royal decree declared "*that there was no god who could deliver after this sort.*" The proud monarch himself is smitten with a singular disease;—he remains subject to it until he acknowledges the true God; and, upon his recovery, he publicly ascribes to HIM both the justice and the mercy of the punishment. This event takes place also in the accomplishment of a dream which none of the wise men of Babylon could interpret: it was interpreted by Daniel, who made the fulfilment to redound to the honour of the true God, by ascribing to him the perfection of knowing the future, which none of the false gods, appealed to by the Chaldean sages, possessed; as the inability of their servants to interpret the dream sufficiently proved. After these singular events, Cyrus takes Babylon, and he finds there the sage and the statesman, Daniel, the worshipper of the God "*who creates both good and evil*," "*who makes the light and forms the darkness.*" There is moral certainty, that he and the principal Persians throughout the empire would have the prophecy of Isaiah respecting Cyrus, delivered more than a hundred years before he was born, and in which his name stood recorded, along with the predicted circumstances of the caption of Babylon, pointed out to them; as every reason, religious and political, urged the Jews to make the prediction a matter of notoriety: and from Cyrus's decree in Ezra it is certain that he was acquainted with it, because there is in the decree an obvious reference to the prophecy. This prophecy so strangely fulfilled would give mighty force to the *doctrine* connected with it, and which it proclaims with so much majesty.

> "I am JEHOVAH, and none else,
> Forming LIGHT, and creating DARKNESS,
> Making PEACE, and creating EVIL,
> I JEHOVAH am the author of all these things."
>
> *Lowth's Translation.*

Here the great principle of corrupted Magianism was directly attacked; and in proportion as the fulfilment of the prophecy was felt to be singular and striking, the doctrine blended with it would attract notice. Its force was both felt and acknowledged, as we have seen in the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the temple. In that, CYRUS acknowledged the true God to be *supreme*, and thus renounced his former faith; and the example, the public example of a prince so beloved, and whose reign was so extended, could not fail to influence the religious opinions of his people. That the effect did not terminate in Cyrus we know; for from the book of EZRA, it appears that both DARIUS and ARTAXERXES made decrees in favour of the Jews, in which Jehovah has the emphatic appellation repeatedly given to him, "the God of heaven;" the very terms used by Cyrus himself. Nor are we to suppose the impression confined to the court; for the history of the three Hebrew youths; of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, sickness, and reformation from idolatry; of the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall by Daniel, the servant of the living God; of his deliverance from the lions; and the publicity of the prophecy of Isaiah respecting Cyrus, were too recent, too public, and too striking in their nature, not to be often and largely talked of. Beside, in the prophecy respecting Cyrus, the *intention* of almighty God in recording

the name of that monarch in an inspired book, and showing beforehand that he had chosen him to overturn the Babylonian empire, is expressly mentioned as having respect to two great objects, First, The deliverance of Israel, and Second, The making known his supreme Divinity *among the nations of the earth*. I again quote Lowth's translation :—

> "For the sake of my *servant Jacob*
> And of Israel my chosen,
> I have even called thee by thy name,
> I have surnamed thee, though thou knewest me not.
> I am *Jehovah*, and none else,
> Beside me there is no God;
> I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me,
> *That they may know, from the rising of the sun,*
> And from the west, that there is NONE BESIDE ME;" &c.

It was therefore intended by this proceeding on the part of Providence, to teach not only CYRUS, but the people of his vast empire, and surrounding nations, FIRST, That He was Jehovah, the self-subsistent, the eternal God; SECOND, That he was GOD ALONE, there being no Deity beside himself; and THIRD, That good and evil, represented by light and darkness, were neither independent nor eternal subsistences; but his great instruments and under his control.

The Persians, who had so vastly extended their empire by the conquest of the countries formerly held by the monarchs of Babylon, were thus prepared for such a reformation of their religion as Zoroaster effected. The principles he advocated had been previously adopted by several of the Persian monarchs, and probably by many of the principal persons of that nation. Zoroaster himself thus became acquainted with the great truths contained in this famous prophecy, which attacked the very foundations of every idolatrous and Manichean system. From the other sacred books of the Jews, who mixed with the Persians in every part of the empire, he evidently learned more. This is sufficiently proved from the many points of similarity between his religion and Judaism, though he should not be allowed to speak so much in the style of the Holy Scriptures as some passages in the Zendavesta would indicate. He found the people however "*prepared of the Lord*" to admit his reformations, and he carried them. I cannot but look upon this as one instance of several merciful dispensations of God to the Gentile world, through his own peculiar people the Jews, by which the idolatries of the heathen were often checked, and the light of truth rekindled among them. In this view the ancient Jews evidently considered the Jewish Church as appointed not to *preserve* only but to *extend* true religion. "*God be merciful to us and bless us, that thy ways may be known upon earth, thy saving health unto all nations.*" This renders pagan nations more evidently "*without excuse.*" That this dispensation of mercy was afterward neglected among the Persians is certain. How long the effect continued we know not, nor how widely it spread; perhaps longer and wider than may now distinctly appear. If the Magi, who came from the east to see Christ, were Persians, some true worshippers of God would appear to have remained in Persia to that day; and if, as is probable, the prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel were retained among them, they might be among those who "waited for redemption," not at Jerusalem, but in a distant part of the world. The *Parsees*, who were nearly extirpated by Mohammedan fanaticism, were charged by their oppressors with the idolatry of fire, and this was probably true of the multitude. Some of their writers however warmly

defended themselves against the charge. A considerable number of them remain in India to this day, and profess to have the books of Zoroaster.

This note contains a considerable digression, but its connection with the argument in the text is obvious. He who rejects the authority of the Scriptures will not be influenced by what has been said of the prophecies of Isaiah, or the events of the life of Daniel; but still it is not to be denied, that while the Persian empire remained, a Persian moral philosopher who taught sublime doctrines flourished, and that his opinions had great influence. The connection of the Jews and Persians is an undeniable matter of historic fact. The tenets ascribed to Zoroaster bear the marks of Jewish origin, because they are mingled with some of the peculiar rites and circumstances of the Jewish temple. From this source the theology of the Persians received improvements in correct and influential notions of Deity especially, and was enriched with the history and doctrines of the Mosaic records. The affairs of the Greeks were so interwoven with those of the Persians, that the sages of Greece could not be ignorant of the opinions of Zertushta, known to them by the name of Zoroaster, and from this school some of their best notions were derived.

Note C.—Page 35.

The greatest corruptions of religion are to be traced to superstition, and to that vain and bewildering habit of philosophizing, which obtained among the ancients. Superstition was the besetting sin of the ignorant, vain speculation of the intelligent. Both sprung from the vicious state of the heart; the expression was different, but the effect the same. The evil probably arose in Egypt, and was largely improved upon by the philosophers of Greece and India. Systems, hypotheses, cosmogonies, &c, are all the work of philosophy; and the most subtle and bewildering errors, such as the eternity of matter, the metempsychosis, the absorption of the human soul at death, &c, have sprung from them.—Ancient wisdom, both religious and moral, was contained in great principles, expressed in maxims, without affectation of systematic relation and arrangement, and without any deep research into reasons and causes. The moment philosophy attempted this, the weakness and waywardness of the human mind began to display themselves. Theories sprung up in succession; and confusion and contradiction at length produced skepticism in all, and in many matured it into total unbelief. The speculative habit affected at once the opinions of ancient Africa and Asia; and in India, the philosophy of Egypt and Greece remains to this day, ripened into its full bearing of deleterious fruit.

The similarity of the Greek and modern Asiatic systems is indeed a very curious subject; for in the latter is exhibited at this day the *philosophy* of paganism, while in other places false religion is seen only or chiefly in its simple form of superstition. The coincidence of the Hindoo and Greek *mythology* has been traced by Sir W. Jones; and his opinions on this subject are strongly confirmed by the still more striking coincidence in the *doctrines* of the Hindoo and Grecian philosophical sects. "The period," says Mr. Ward, (*View of the History of the Hindoos, &c,*) "when the most eminent of the Hindoo philosophers flourished, is still involved in much obscurity; but the apparent agreement in many striking particulars between the Hindoo and the Greek systems of philosophy, not only suggests the idea of some union in their origin, but strongly pleads for their belonging to one age, notwithstanding the unfathomable antiquity claimed by

the Hindoos; and after the reader shall have compared the two systems, the author is persuaded he will not consider the conjecture as improbable, that Pythagoras and others did really visit India, or that Goutumu and Pythagoras were cotemporaries, or nearly so." (Vol. 4.)

Many of the subjects discussed among the Hindoos were the very subjects which excited the disputes in the Greek academies, such as the eternity of matter, the first cause; God the soul of the world; the doctrine of atoms; creation; the nature of the gods; the doctrines of fate, transmigration, successive revolutions of worlds, absorption into the Divine Being," &c. (Ibid. p. 115.)

Mr. Ward enters at large into this coincidence in his introductory remarks to his fourth volume, to which the reader is referred. It shall only be observed, that those speculations, and subtle arguments just mentioned, both in the Greek and Asiatic branches of pagan philosophy, gave birth to absolute Atheism.—Several of the Greek philosophic sects, as is well known, were professedly Atheistic. Cudworth enumerates four forms assumed by this species of unbelief.—The same principles which distinguish their sects may be traced in several of those of the Hindoos, and above all the Atheistical system of Budhoo, branched off from the vain philosophy of the Brachminical schools, and has extended farther than Hindooism itself. The reason of all this is truly given by Bishop Warburton, as to the Greeks, and it is equally applicable to the Asiatic philosophy of the present day, which is so clearly one and the same, and also to many errors which have crept into the Church of Christ itself. "The philosophy of the Greeks," he observes, led to unbelief, "because it was above measure refined and speculative, and used to be determined by *metaphysical* rather than by *moral* principles, and to stick to all consequences, how absurd soever, that were seen to arise from such principles."

CHAPTER VI.

The Necessity of Revelation;—State of Religious Knowledge among the Heathen.

Several presumptive arguments have been offered in favour of the opinion, that almighty God in his goodness has made an express revelation of his will to mankind. They have been drawn from the fact, that we are *moral agents*, and therefore under a *law* or rule of conduct —from the consideration that no law can be binding till made known, or at least rendered cognizable by those whom it is intended to govern—from the inability of the generality of men to collect any adequate information on moral and religious subjects by processes of *induction*—from the *insufficiency of reason*, even in the wisest, to make any satisfactory discovery of the first principles of religion and duty—from the want of all *authority* and influence in such discoveries, upon the majority of mankind, had a few minds of superior order and with more favourable opportunities been capable of making them—from the fact that no such *discovery* was ever made by the wisest of the ancient sages, inasmuch as the truths they held were in existence before their day, even in the earliest periods of the patriarchal ages—and from the fact, that whatever

truths they collected from early tradition, or from the descendants of Abraham, mediately or immediately, they so *corrupted* under the pretence of improving them, (5) as to destroy their harmony and moral influence, thereby greatly weakening the probability that moral truth was ever an object of the steady and sincere pursuit of men. To these *presumptions* in favour of an *express* revelation, *written, preserved with care*, and appointed to be *preached* and *published* under the *authority of its author*, for the benefit of all, wise or unwise, we may add the powerful presumption which is afforded by the *necessity* of the case. This necessity of a revelation is to be collected, not only from what has been advanced, but from the state of moral and religious knowledge and practice, in those countries where the records which profess to contain the Mosaic and the Christian revelations have been or are still unknown.

The necessity of immediate Divine instruction was acknowledged by many of the wisest and most inquiring of the heathen, under the conviction of the entire inability of man unassisted by God to discover truth with certainty,—so greatly had the primitive traditional revelations been obscured by errors before the times of the most ancient of those sages among the heathen, whose writings have in whole or in part been transmitted to us, and so little confidence had they in themselves to separate truth from error, or to say, "This is true and that false." And as the necessity of an express and authenticated revelation was acknowledged, so it was publicly exhibited, because on the very first principles of religion and morals, there was either entire ignorance, or no settled and consonant opinions, even among the wisest of mankind themselves. (6)

(5) Plato, in his Epinominis, acknowledges that the Greeks learned many things from the barbarians, though he asserts, that they *improved* what they thus borrowed, and made it better, especially in what related to the *worship of the gods*. (*Plat. Oper.* p. 703. Edit. Ficin. Lugd. 1590.)

(6) Plato, beginning his discourse of the gods and the generation of the world, cautions his disciples "*not to expect any thing beyond a likely conjecture concerning these things.*" Cicero, referring to the same subject, says, "*Latent ista omnia crassis occulta et circumfusa tenebris*, all these things are involved in deep obscurity."

The following passage from the same author may be recommended to the consideration of modern exalters of the power of unassisted reason. The treasures of the philosophy of past ages were poured at his feet, and he had studied every branch of human wisdom, with astonishing industry and acuteness, yet he observes, 'Quod si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intueri, et perspicere, eademque optima duce cursum vitæ conficere possemus; haud erat sane quod quisquam rationem, ac doctrinam requireret. Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos, quos celeriter malis moribus, opinionibusque depravati sic restinguimus, ut nusquam naturæ lumen appareat. If we had come into the world in such circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned nature herself and have been able in the course of our lives to follow her true and uncorrupted directions, this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of teaching and instruction: but now nature has given us only some

Some proofs of this have already been adduced, but the importance of the subject requires that they should be enlarged.

Though the belief of one Supreme Being has been found in many parts of the world, yet the notion of subordinate deities, the immediate dispensers of good and evil to men, and the objects of their fear and worship, has almost equally obtained; and this of necessity destroyed or greatly counteracted the moral influence of that just opinion.

"The people generally among the Gentiles," says Dr. Tenison, "did rise little higher than the objects of sense. They worshipped them each as supreme in their kind, or no otherwise unequal than the sun, and the moon, or the other celestial bodies, by the adoration of which the ancient idolaters, as Job intimateth, denied (or excluded) the God that is above. Porphyry himself, one of the most plausible apologists for the religion of the Gentiles, doth own in some the most gross and blockish idolatry of mean objects. He tells us that it is not a matter of which we should be amazed, if most ignorant men esteemed wood and stones *Divine statues*; seeing they who are unlearned look upon monuments which have inscriptions upon them as ordinary stones, and regard books as so many bundles of paper." (*Discourse on Idolatry*, p. 50.)

The modern idolatry of Hindostan, which in principle differs nothing from that of the ancient world, affords a striking comment upon this point, and indeed is of great importance in enabling us to conceive justly of the true character and practical effects of idolatry in all ages. One Supreme Being is acknowledged by the Hindoos, but they never worship him, nor think that he concerns himself with human affairs at all.

"The Hindoos believe in one God, so completely abstracted in his own essence, however, that in this state he is emphatically *the unknown*, and is consequently neither the object of hope nor of fear; he is even destitute of intelligence, and remains in a state of profound repose." (*Ward's Hindoo Mythology*, vol. ii, p. 306.)

"This Being," says Moore, (*Hindoo Pantheon*, p. 132,) "is called Brahm, one eternal mind, the self-existing, incomprehensible Spirit. To him, however, the Hindoos erect no altars. The objects of their adora-

small sparks of right reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt opinions and evil practices, that the true light of nature nowhere appears." (*Tusc. Quæst.* 3.)

The same author, (*Tusc. Quæst.* 1,) having reckoned up the opinions of philosophers as to the soul's immortality, concludes thus, "Harum sententiarum quæ vera est Deus aliquis viderit, quæ verisimillima est, magna quæstio est. Which of these opinions is true, some god must tell us; which is most like truth, is a great question." Jamblicus, speaking of the principles of Divine worship, saith: "It is manifest that those things are to be done which are pleasing to God; but what they are, it is not easy to know, except a man were taught them by God himself, or by some person who had received them from God, or obtained the knowledge of them by some Divine means." (*Jamb. in Vit. Pythag.* c. 28.)

tion commence with the *triad,—Brahma, Vishnu*, and *Seva*, which represent the almighty powers of *creation, preservation*, and *destruction*."

The learned among the classic heathen, it is true, occasionally speak nobly concerning God and his attributes; but at the same time they were led by their own imaginations and reasonings to conclusions, which neutralize the effect of their sublimer conceptions and often contradict them. The eternity of matter, for instance, was held by the Greek and Roman philosophers and by their preceptors in the oriental schools, who thought it absolutely impossible that any thing should be produced from nothing, thus destroying the notion of creation in its proper sense, and of a Supreme Creator. This opinion, as Bishop Stillingfleet shows, (*Origines Sacræ*, l. iii, c. 2,) is contrary to the omnipotence and independence of God, and is a great abatement of those correct views which the *words* of the ancient philosophers would seem sometimes to express. (7)

It had another injurious effect; it destroyed the interesting doctrine of Divine government as to those natural evils to which men are subject. These they traced to the unchangeable and eternal nature of matter, which even the Supreme God could not control. Thus Seneca says, (*De Provid.* cap. 5,) "that evil things happen to good men, *quia non potest Artifex mutare materiam*, because God the Artificer could not change matter; and that *a magno Artifice multa formantur prava*, many things were made ill by the great Artificer; not that he wanted art, but through the stubbornness of matter," in which they generally agree. This opinion of theirs was brought from the oriental schools, where it

(7) When we meet with passages in the writings of heathens which recommend moral virtues, and speak in a fit and becoming manner of God, we are apt from our more elevated knowledge of these subjects to attach more correct and precise ideas to the terms used, than the original writers themselves, and to give them credit for better views than they entertained. It is one proof, that though some of them speak, for instance, of God seeing and knowing all things, they did not conceive of the omniscience of God in the manner in which that attribute is explained by those who have learned what God is from his own words; that some of the pagan philosophers who lived after the Christian era, complain that the Christians had introduced a very troublesome and busy God, who did "*in omnium mores, actus, omnium verba denique, et occultas cogitationes diligenter inquirere*, diligently inquire into the manners, actions, words, and secret thoughts of all men." Cicero, too, denies the foreknowledge of God, and for the same reason which has been urged against it in modern times by some who, for the time at least, have closed their eyes upon the testimony of the Scriptures on this point, and been willing, in order to serve a favourite theory, to go back to the obscurity of paganism. The difficulty with him is, that *prescience is inconsistent with contingency*. Mihi ne in Deum cadere videatur ut sciat quid casu et fortuito futurum sit; si enim scit, certe illud eveniet; si certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est; est autem fortuna, rerum ergo fortuitarum nulla præsensio est. (*De Fato*. n. 12, 13.)

had been long received; nor was it confined to Egypt and Chaldea. It was one of the dogmas which Confucius taught in China in the fifth century before Christ, that out of nothing that which is cannot be produced, and that material bodies must have existed from all eternity. From this notion it follows, that there is no calamity to which we are not liable, and that God himself is unable to protect us from it. Prayer is useless, and trust in him is absurd. The noble doctrine of the infliction of misery by a wise and gracious Being for our correction and improvement, so often dwelt upon in Scripture, could have no place in a system which admitted this tenet; God could neither be "a refuge in trouble," nor a Father, "correcting us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." What they knew of God was therefore, by such speculations, rendered entirely unprofitable.

But a worse consequence resulted from this opinion. By some of them the necessary obliquity and perverseness of matter was regarded not only as the source of natural, but also of moral evil; by which they either made sin *necessary* and irresistible, or found in this opinion much to palliate it.

Others refer moral evil to a natural principle of evil, an evil god "emulous of the good God," which Plutarch says, (8) is a tradition of great antiquity, derived "from the divines εκ θεολογων and lawgivers to the poets and philosophers, whose first author cannot be found." But whether natural and moral evil be traced to an eternal and uncontrollable matter, or to an eternal and independent anti-god, it is clear that the notion of a *Supreme Deity*, as contained in the Scriptures, and as conceived of by modern Theists, who have borrowed their light from them, could have no existence in such systems; and that by making moral evil necessary, men were taught to consider it as a misfortune rather than a crime, and were thus in fact encouraged to commit it by regarding it as unavoidable.

In like manner, though occasionally we find many excellent things said of the providence of God, all these were weakened or destroyed by other opinions. The Epicurean sect denied the doctrine, and laid it down as a maxim, "that what was blessed and immortal gave neither any trouble to itself nor to others;" a notion which exactly agrees with the system of the modern Hindoos. "According to the doctrine of Aristotle, God resides in the celestial sphere, and observes nothing, and cares for nothing beyond himself. Residing in the first sphere, he possesses neither immensity nor omnipresence; far removed from the inferior parts of the universe, he is not even a spectator of what is passing among its inhabitants." (*Enfield's History of Philosophy*, lib. ii,

(8) De Isid. et Osir.—Dr. Cudworth thinks that Plutarch has indulged in an overstrained assertion: but the confidence with which the philosopher speaks is at least a proof of the great extent of this opinion.

cap. 9.) The Stoics contended for a providence, but in their creed it was counteracted by the doctrine of an absolute necessity, or fate, to which God and matter, or the universe, which consists, as they thought, of both, was immutably subject; and where they allow it, they confine the care of the gods to great affairs only.

The Platonists, and the followers of Pythagoras believed that all things happened κατα θειαν προνοιαν, *according to Divine providence;* but this they overthrew by joining fortune with God. "God, fortune, and opportunity," says Plato, "govern all the affairs of men." (*De Leg.* lib. 4.)

To them also there were "*Lords many and gods many:*" and wherever Polytheism is admitted, it is as destructive of the doctrine of providence as fate, though by a different process. The fatalist makes all things fixed and certain, and thus excludes government; the Polytheist gives up the government of the world to innumerable opposing and contrary wills, and thus makes every thing uncertain. If the favour of one deity be propitiated, the wrath of another, equally or more powerful, may be provoked; or the gods may quarrel among themselves. Such is the only providence which can be discovered in the Iliad of Homer, and the Æneid of Virgil, poems which unquestionably embody the popular belief of the times in which they were written. The same confused and contradictory management of the affairs of men, we see in all modern idolatrous systems, only that with length of duration they appear to have become more oppressive and distracting. Where so many deities are essentially malignant and cruel to men; where demons are supposed to have power to afflict and to destroy at pleasure; and where aspects of the stars, and the screams of birds, and other ominous circumstances, are thought to have an irresistible influence upon the fortunes of life, and the occurrences of every day; and especially where, to crown the whole, there is an utter ignorance of one supreme controlling infinite mind, or his existence is denied; or he who is capable of exercising such a superintendence as might render him the object of hope, is supposed to be totally unconcerned with human affairs; there can be no ground of firm trust, no settled hope, no permanent consolation. Timidity and gloom tenant every bosom, and in many instances render life a burden. (9)

(9) The testimony of missionaries, who see the actual effects of paganism in the different countries where they labour, is particularly valuable. On the point mentioned in the text, the Wesleyan missionaries thus speak of the state of the Cingalese —"We feel ourselves incapable of giving you a full view of the deplorable state of a people, who believe that all things are governed by chance; who find malignant gods, or devils, in every planet, whose influence over mankind they consider to be exceeding great, and the agents who inflict all the evil that men suffer in the world. A people so circumstanced need no addition to their miseries, but are objects toward which Christian pity will extend itself, as far as the voice of their case can reach. They are literally, through fear of death, or malignant demons, all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Another great principle of religion is the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; and though in some form it is recognized in pagan systems, and the traditions of the primitive ages may be traced in their extravagant perversions and fables; its evidence was either greatly diminished, or it was mixed up with notions entirely subversive of the moral effect which it was originally intended to produce.

Of the ancient Chaldean philosophy, not much is known. In its best state it contained many of the principles of the patriarchal religion; but at length, as we find from Scripture, it degenerated into the doctrine of judicial astrology, which is so nearly allied to fatalism, as to subvert the idea of the present life being a state of probation, and the future a state of just and gracious rewards and punishments.

Ancient writers differ as to the opinions of the learned of Egypt on the human soul. Diodorus Siculus says, they believed its immortality, and the future existence of the just among the gods. Herodotus ascribes to them the doctrine of transmigration. Both may be reconciled. The former doctrine was the most ancient, the latter was induced by that progress of error which we observe among all nations. Another subtle notion grew up with it, which infected the philosophy of Greece, and, spreading throughout Asia, has done more to destroy the moral effect of a belief in the future existence of man, than any other. This was, "that God is the soul of the world," from which all human spirits came, and to which they will return, some immediately, and others through long courses of transmigration. The doctrine of ancient revelation, of which this was a subtle and fatal perversion, is obvious. The Scripture account is, that the human soul was from God by creation; the refinement of pagan philosophy, that it is from him by emanation, or separation of essence, and still remains a separate portion of God, seeking its return to him. With respect to the future, revelation always taught, that the souls of the just return to God at death, not to lose their individuality, but to be united to him in holy and delightful communion: the philosophic perversion was, that the parts so separated from God, and connected for a time with matter, would be reunited to the great source by *refusion*, as a drop of water to the ocean. (1) Thus philosophy refined upon the doctrine of immortality until it converted it into annihilation itself, for so it is in the most absolute sense as to distinct consciousness and personality. The prevalence of this notion under different modifications is indeed very remarkable.

(1) "Interim tamen vix ulli fuere (quæ humanæ mentis caligo, atque imbecillitas est,) qui non inciderint in errorem illum de *refusione in Animam mundi*. Nimirum, sicut existimarunt singulorum animas particulas esse animæ mundanæ quarum quælibet suo corpore, ut aqua vase, effluere, ac animæ mundi, e qua deducta fuerit, iterum uniri." (GASSENDI *Animadv. in Lib.* 10, *Diog. Laertii* p. 550.)

Bishop Warburton proves that this opinion was held not merely by the Atheistical and skeptical sects among the Greeks, but by what he calls the *Philosophic Quaternion* of dogmatic Theists, the four renowned schools, the PYTHAGORIC, the PLATONIC, the PERIPATETIC, and the STOIC; and on this ground argues, that though they taught the doctrine of future rewards and punishments to the populace, as a means of securing their obedience to the laws, they themselves did not believe what they propagated; and in this he was doubtless correct. With future reward and punishment, in the proper and commonly received sense in all ages, this notion was entirely incompatible. He observes, "And that the reader may not suspect these kind of phrases, that the *soul is part of God, discerpted from him, of his nature*, which perpetually occur in the writings of the ancients, to be only highly figurate expressions, and not to be measured by the severe standard of metaphysical propriety, he is desired to take notice of one consequence drawn from this principle, and universally held by antiquity, which was this, *that the soul was eternal a parte ante, as well as a parte post*, which the Latins well express by the word *sempiternus*. But when the ancients are said to hold the *pre* and *post existence* of the soul, and therefore to attribute a proper eternity to it, we must not suppose that they understood it to be eternal in its distinct and peculiar existence; but that it was discerpted from the substance of God in *time*, and would in *time* be rejoined and resolved into it again; which they explained by a bottle's being filled with sea water, that swimming there awhile, on the bottle's breaking, flowed in again, and mingled with the common mass. They only differed about the time of this *reunion* and *resolution*, the greater part holding it to be at death; but the Pythagoreans not till after many transmigrations. The Platonists went between these two opinions, and rejoined pure and unpolluted souls, immediately on death, to the universal Spirit. But those which had contracted much defilement, were sent into a succession of other bodies, to purge and purify them before they returned to their parent substance."

Some learned men have denied the consequence which Warburton wished to establish from these premises, and consider the resorption of these sages as figurative, and consequently compatible with distinct consciousness and individuality. The researches, however, since that time made into the corresponding philosophy of the Hindoos, bear this acute and learned man out to the full length of his conclusion. "God, as separated from matter, the Hindoos contemplate as a being reposing in his own happiness, destitute of ideas; as infinite placidity; as an unruffled sea of bliss; as being perfectly abstracted and void of consciousness. They therefore deem it the height of perfection to be like this being. The person whose very nature, say they, is absorbed in Divine meditation; whose life is like a sweet sleep, unconscious and undisturbed

who does not even desire God, and who is changed into the image of the ever blessed, obtains absorption into Brumhu." (*Ward's View of the Hindoos*, 8vo, vol. ii, p. 177–8.) And that this doctrine of absorption is taken literally, is proved, not merely by the terms in which it is expressed, though these are sufficiently unequivocal; but by its being opposed by some of the followers of Vishnoo, and by a few also of their philosophers. Mr. Ward quotes Jumudugnee, as an exception to the common opinion: he says, "The idea of losing a distinct existence by absorption, as a drop is lost in the ocean, is abhorrent. It is pleasant to feed on sweetmeats, but no one wishes to be the sweetmeat itself." So satisfactorily is this point made out against the "*wisdom of this world*;" —by it the world neither knew *God* nor *man*.

Another notion equally extensive and equally destructive of the original doctrines of the immortality of the human soul, and a state of future rewards and punishments, which sprung up in the Egyptian schools, and was from thence transmitted into Greece, India, and throughout all Asia, was that of a periodical destruction and renovation of all things. "They conceived," says Diodorus Siculus, "that the universe undergoes a periodical conflagration, after which all things were to be restored to their primitive form, to pass again through a similar succession of changes." The primitive tenet, of which this was a corruption, is also evident; and it affords another singular instance of the subtlety and mischief of that spirit of error which operated with so much activity in early times, that the doctrine of the destruction of the world, and the consequent termination of the probationary state of the human race preparatory to the general judgment, an awful and most salutary revelation, should have been so wrought into philosophic theory, and so surrounded with poetic embellishment, as to engage the intellect, and to attract the imagination, only the more effectually to destroy the great *moral* of a doctrine which was not denied, and covertly to induce an entire unbelief in the eternal future existence of man.

As the Stoics held that all inferior divinities and human souls were portions separated from the soul of the world, and would return into the first celestial fire, so they supposed, that at the same time the whole visible world would be consumed in one general conflagration. "Then," says Seneca, "after an interval the world will be entirely renewed, every animal will be reproduced, and a race of men free from guilt will repeople the earth. Degeneracy and corruption are however to creep in again, and the same process is to go on for ever." (*Ep.* 9.) This too is the Brahminical notion: "The Hindoos are taught to believe that at the end of every Calpa (creation or formation) all things are absorbed in the Deity, and at a stated time the creative power will again be called into action." (*Moore's Hindoo Pantheon.*) And though the system of the Budhists denies a Creator, it holds the same species of

evolution. "They are of opinion that the universe is eternal, at least they neither know it had a beginning, or will have an end; but it is homogeneous, and composed of an infinite number of similar worlds, each of which is a likeness of the other, and each of which is in a constant state of alteration,—not stationary for a moment,—at the instant of greatest perfection beginning to decline, and at the moment of greatest chaotic ruin beginning to regenerate. They compare such changes to a wheel in motion perpetually going round." (*Dr. Davey's Account of Ceylon.*)

But other instances of darkness and error among even civilized heathens respecting the human soul, and a future state are not wanting; for it is a fact which ought never to be lost sight of in these inquiries, that among pagans, opinions on these subjects have never been either certain or rational; and that error once received has in no instance been exchanged for truth; but has gone on multiplying itself, and assuming an infinite variety of forms.

The doctrine of Aristotle and the Peripatetics gives no countenance to the opinion of the soul's immortality, or even of its existence after death. Democritus and his followers taught, that the soul is material and mortal; Heraclitus, that when the soul is purified from moist vapours, it returns into the soul of the universe; if not, it perishes: Epicurus and his followers, that "*when death is, we are not.*" The leading men among the Romans, when philosophy was introduced among them, followed the various Greek sects. We have seen the uncertainty of Cicero. (2) Pliny declares, that "*non magis a morte sensus ullus aut*

(2) From the philosophical works of Cicero it may be difficult to collect his own opinions, as he chiefly occupies himself in explaining those of others; but in his epistles to his friends, when, as Warburton observes, we see the *man* divested of the politician, and the sophist, he professes his disbelief of a future state in the frankest manner. Thus in lib. 6, epis. 3, to Torquatus, written in order to console him in the unfortunate state of the affairs of their party, he observes: "Sed hæc consolatio levis est; illa gravior, qua te uti spero; ego certe utor. Nec enim dum ero, angar ulla re, cum omni vacem culpa; et si non ero, sensu omnino carebo. But there is another and a far higher consolation, which I hope is your support, as it certainly is mine. For so long as I shall preserve my innocence, I will never while I exist be anxiously disturbed at any event that may happen; and if I shall cease to exist, all sensibility must cease with me."

Similar expressions are found in his letters to Toranius, to Lucius Mescinius, and others, which those who wish to prove him a believer in the soul's immortality endeavour to account for by supposing that he accommodated his sentiments to the principles of his friends. A singular solution, and one which scarcely can be seriously adopted, since in the above cited passage he so strongly expresses what is his own opinion, and hopes that his friend takes refuge in the same consolation. It may be allowed that Cicero alternated between unbelief and doubt; but never I think between doubt and certainty. The last was a point to which he never seems to have reached.

animæ aut corpori quam ante natalem, the soul and body have no more sense after death, than before we were born." (*Nat. Hist.* lib 7, cap. 55.) Cæsar, "that beyond death there is *neque curæ neque gaudio locum*, neither place for care or joy." (*Sallust. De Bello Catil.* sec. 5.) Seneca in his 102d epistle speaks of a Divine part within us, which joins us to the gods; and tells Lucilius, "that the day which he fears as his last *æterni natalis est*, is the birth-day of eternity;" but then he says, "he was willing to hope it might be so, on the account of some great men, *rem gratissimam promittentium magis quam probantium*, who promised what they could not prove;" and on other occasions he speaks out plainly, and says that death makes us incapable of good or evil. The poets, it is true, spoke of a future state of rewards and punishments; they had the joys of Elysium and the tortures of Tartarus; but both philosophers and poets regarded them as vulgar fables. Virgil does not hide this, and numerous quotations of the same import might be given both from him and others of their poets.

> "Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas;
> Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
> Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!"—*Georg.* 2, l. 490, &c
>
> Happy the man, whose vigorous soul can pierce
> Through the formation of this universe,
> Who nobly dares despise, with soul sedate,
> The din of Acheron, and vulgar fears and fate.—WARTON.

Nor was the skepticism and unbelief of the wise and great long kept from the vulgar, among whom they wished to maintain the old superstitions as instruments by which they might be controlled. Cicero complains, that the common people in his day mostly followed the doctrine of Epicurus.

Since then these erroneous and mischievous views concerning God, providence, and a future state, or the total denial of all of them, are found to have resulted from the rejection or loss of the primitive traditions; and farther as it is clear that such errors are totally subversive of the fundamental principles of morals and religion, and afford inducement to the commission of every species of crime without remorse, or fear of punishment; the necessity of a republication of these great doctrines in an explicit and authentic manner, and of institutions for teaching and enforcing them upon all ranks of men, is evident; and whatever proof may be adduced for the authentication of the Christian revelation, it can never be pretended, that a revelation to restore these great principles was not called for by the actual condition of man; and, in proportion to the necessity of the case, is the strength of the presumption that one has been mercifully afforded.

CHAPTER VII.

The Necessity of Revelation:—State of Morals among the Heathen.

If the necessity of a revelation may be argued from the confused, contradictory, and false notions of heathen nations as to the principal doctrines of religion; no less forcibly may the argument be pursued from the state of their morals both in knowledge and in practice.

This argument is simple and obvious. If the nature, extent, and obligation of moral rules had become involved in great misapprehension and obscurity; if what they knew of right and wrong wanted an enforcement and an authority which it could not receive from their respective systems; and if, for want of efficient, counteracting religious principles, the general practice had become irretrievably vicious; a direct interposition of the Divine Being was required for the republication of moral rules and for their stronger enforcement.

The notions of all civilized heathens on moral subjects, like their knowledge of the first principles of religion, mingled as they were with their superstitions, prove that both were derived from a common source. There was a substantial agreement among them in many questions of right and wrong; but the boundaries which they themselves acknowledged were not kept up, and the rule was gradually lowered to the practice, though not in all cases so as entirely to efface the original communication.

This is an important consideration, inasmuch as it indicates the transmission of both religion and morals from the patriarchal system, and that both the primitive doctrines and their corresponding morals received early sanctions, the force of which was felt through succeeding ages. It shows too, that even the heathen have always been under a moral government. The laws of God have never been quite obliterated, though their practice has ever been below their knowledge, and though the law itself was greatly and wilfully corrupted through the influence of their vicious inclinations.

This subject may perhaps be best illustrated by adverting to some of the precepts of the Second Table, which embodied the morals of the patriarchal ages, under a new sanction. Of the obligation of these, all heathen nations have been sensible; and yet, in all, the rule was perverted in theory and violated in practice.

Murder has, in all ages and among all civilized and most savage heathen nations also, been regarded as an atrocious crime; and yet the rule was so far accommodated to the violent and ferocious habits of men, as to fill every heathen land with blood guiltiness. The slight regard paid to the life of man, in all heathen countries, cannot have

escaped the notice of reflecting minds. They knew the *rule;* but the act, under its grosser and more deliberate forms only, was thought to violate it. Among the Romans, men were murdered in their very *pastimes*, by being made to fight with wild beasts and with each *other*; and though this was sometimes condemned, as a "*spectaculum crudele et inhumanum*," yet the passion for blood increased, and no war ever caused so great a slaughter as did the gladiatorial combats. They were at first confined to the funerals of great persons. The first show of this kind exhibited in Rome by the Bruti, on the death of their father, consisted of three couples, but afterward the number greatly increased. Julius Cæsar presented 300 pairs of gladiators; and the Emperor Trajan, 10,000 of them, for the *entertainment* of the people.—Sometimes these horrid exhibitions, in which, as Seneca says, "Homo, sacra res, homo jam per lusum et jocum occiditur," when the practice had attained its height, deprived Europe of 20,000 lives in one month.(3)

This is farther illustrated by the treatment of slaves, which composed so large a portion of the population of ancient states. (4) They knew and acknowledged the evil of murder, and had laws for its punishment; but to this despised class of human beings they did not extend the rule; nor was killing them accounted murder, any more than the killing of a beast. The master had absolute power of life, or death, or torture, and their lives were therefore sacrificed in the most wanton manner. (5)

By various sophistries, suggested by their vices, their selfishness, and their cruelty, the destruction of children also, under certain circumstances, ceased to be regarded as a crime. In many heathen nations it was allowed to destroy the fœtus in the womb; to strangle, or drown,

(3) Though Cicero, Seneca, and others, condemned these barbarities, it was in so incidental and indifferent a manner as to produce no effect. They were abolished soon after the establishment of Christianity, and this affords an illustration of the admission of Rousseau himself. "La philosophie ne peut faire aucun bien, que la Religion ne le fasse encore mieux : et la Religion en fait beaucoup que la philosophie ne sauroit faire."

(4) In the 110th Olympiad, there were at Athens only 21,000 citizens and 40,000 slaves. It was common for a private citizen of Rome to have 10 or 20,000. (TAYLOR'S *Civil Law.*)

(5) The youth of Sparta made it their pastime frequently to lie in ambush by night for the slaves, and sally out with daggers upon every Helot who came near them, and murder him in cold blood. The EPHORI, as soon as they entered upon their office, declared war against them in form, that there might be an appearance of destroying them legally. It was the custom for Vedius Pollio, when his slaves had committed a fault, sometimes a very trifling one, to order them to be thrown into his fish-ponds, to feed his lampreys. It was the *constant custom*, as we learn from Tacitus, Annal. xiv, 43, when a master was murdered in his own house, to put all the slaves to death indiscriminately. For a just and affecting account of the condition of slaves in ancient states, see PORTEUS'S *Beneficial Effects of Christianity.*

or expose infants, especially if sickly or deformed, and that which in Christian states, is considered as the most atrocious of crimes, was, by the most celebrated of ancient pagan nations, esteemed a wise and political expedient to rid the state of useless or troublesome members, and was even enjoined by some of their most celebrated sages and legislators. The same practice continues to this day in a most affecting extent, not only among uncivilized pagans, but among the Hindoos and the Chinese.

This practice of perverting and narrowing the extent of the holy law of God, which had been transmitted to them, was exemplified also in the allowing, or rather commending the practice of suicide.

Doubtless, the primitive law against murder condemned also HATRED and REVENGE. Our Lord restored it to its true meaning among the Jews; and that it was so understood even among the ancient heathens, is clear from a placable and forgiving spirit being sometimes praised, and the contrary censured by their sages, moralists, and poets. Yet not only was the rule violated almost universally in practice; but it was also disputed and denied in many of its applications by the authority of their wise and learned men; so that, as far as the authority of moral teachers went, a full scope was given for the indulgence of hatred, malice, and insatiate revenge. One of the qualities of the good *man* described by Cicero is, that he hurts no one, except he be injured himself. "Qui nemini nocet, nisi lacessitus injuria;" and he declares as to himself, "*sic ulciscar facinora singula quemadmodum a quibusque sum provocatus:* I will revenge all injuries, according as I am provoked by any;" and Aristotle speaks of meekness as a defect, because the meek man will not avenge himself, and of revenge, as "ανθρωπικωτερον μαλλον, a more manly thing." (*Moral.* l. 4, c. 11.)

"Thou shalt not commit ADULTERY," was another great branch of the patriarchal law, existing before the Decalogue, as appears from the sacred history. It forbids uncleanness of every kind, in thought and deed, and specially guards the sanctity of marriage: nor is there any precept more essential to public morals, and to the whole train of personal, social, domestic, and national virtues.

It is not necessary to bring detailed proof of the almost universal gross, and habitual violation of this sacred law in all pagan nations, both ancient and modern, from its first stages down to crimes παρα φυσιν. This is sufficiently notorious to all acquainted with the history of the ancient and modern pagan world; and will not be denied by any. It is only requisite to show that they had the law, and that it was weakened and corrupted, so as to render a republication necessary.

The public laws against adultery in almost all heathen states, and the censures of moralists and satirists, are sufficiently in proof that such a law was known; and the higher the antiquity of the times, the more

respect we see paid to chastity, and the better was the practice. Nor was the act only considered by some of their moralists as sinful; but the thought and desire, as may be observed in passages both in Greek and Roman writers. But as to this vice, too, as well as others, the practice lowered the rule; and the authority of one lawgiver and moralist being neutralized by another, license was given to unbounded offence.

Divorce, formerly permitted only in cases of adultery, became at length a mere matter of caprice, and that both with Jews and Gentiles: and among the latter, adultery was chiefly interpreted as the violation of the marriage covenant by the wife only, or by the man with a married woman, thus leaving the husband a large license of vicious indulgence. To whoredom and similar vices, lawgivers, statesmen, philosophers, and moralists gave the sanction of their *opinions* and their *practice;* which foul blot of ancient heathenism continues to this day, to mark the morals of pagan countries. (6)

In most civilized states the very existence of society, and the natural selfishness of man, led to the preservation of the ancient laws against THEFT and RAPINE, and to the due execution of the statutes made against them; but in this also we see the same disposition to corrupt the original prohibition. It was not extended to strangers or to foreign countries; nor was it generally interpreted to reach to any thing more than flagrant acts of violence. Usury, extortion, and fraud were rather regarded as laudatory acts, than as injurious to character; and so they continue to be esteemed wherever Christianity has not issued her authoritative laws against injustice in all its degrees. Throughout India, there is said to be scarcely such a thing as common honesty.

Another great branch of morality is TRUTH; but on the obvious obligation to speak it, we find the same laxity both of opinion and practice; and in this, heathenism presents a striking contrast to Christianity, which commands us "*to speak the truth one to another*," and denounces damnation against him that "*loves or makes a lie.*"

(6) Terence says of simple fornication, "*Non est scelus, adolescentulum scortari flagitium est.*" The Spartans, through a principle in the institutions of Lycurgus, which controlled their ancient opinions on this subject, in certain prescribed cases, allowed adultery in the wife; and Plutarch, in his Life of Lycurgus, mentioning these laws, commends them as being made "φυσικως και πολιτικως, according to nature and polity." Callicratides, the Pythagorean, tells the wife that she must bear with her husband's irregularities, since the *law* allows this to the man and not to the woman. Plutarch speaks to the same purpose in several places of his writings. On the other hand, some of the philosophers condemned adultery; and in many places, it was punished in the woman with death, in the man with infamy. Still, however, the same vacillation of judgment, and the same limitations, of what they sometimes confess to be the ancient rule and custom, may be observed throughout; but as far as the authority of philosophers went it was chiefly on the side of vicious practice.

They knew that "*tollendum est ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium*, (*Cic. de Off.* l. iii, n. 81,) no lie was to be used in contracts;" and that an honest man should do and speak nothing in falsehood and with hypocrisy; but they more frequently departed from this rule than enjoined it The rule of Menander was, "a lie is better than a hurtful truth." Plato says, "he may lie who knows how to do it *in a fit season*;" and Maximus Tyrius, "that there is nothing decorous in truth, but when it is profitable;" and both Plato and the Stoics frame a jesuitical distinction between lying *with the lips* and *in the mind*. Deceit and falsehood have been therefore the character of all pagan nations, and continue so to be to this day. This is the character of the Chinese, as given by the best authorities; and of the Hindoos it is stated by the most respectable Europeans, not merely missionaries, but by those who have long held official, civil, and judicial situations among them, that their disregard of truth is uniform and systematic. When discovered, it causes no surprise in the one party, or humiliation in the other. Even when they have truth to tell, they seldom fail to bolster it up with some appended falsehoods. (7)

Nor can the force of the argument in favour of the necessity of a direct revelation of the will of God by these facts be weakened by alleging, what is unhappily too true, that where the Christian revelation has been known, great violations of all these rules have been commonly observed; for, not to urge the moral superiority of the worst of Christian states, in all of them the authority and sanction of religion is directed against vice; while among heathens, their religion itself, having been corrupted by the wickedness of man, has become the great instrument of encouraging every species of wickedness. This circumstance so fully demonstrates the necessity of an interposition on the part of God to restore truth to the world, that it deserves a particular consideration

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CHAPTER VIII.

The Necessity of Revelation:—Religions of the Heathen.

THAT the religions which have prevailed among pagan nations have been destructive of morality, cannot be denied.

(7) "It is the business of all," says Sir John Shore, "from the Ryot to the Dewan, to conceal and deceive. The simplest matters of fact are designedly covered with a veil, which no human understanding can penetrate." The prevalence of perjury is so universal, as to involve the judges in extreme perplexity "The honest men," says Mr. Strachey, "as well as the rogues, are perjured Even where the real facts are sufficient to convict the offender, the witnesses against him must add others, often notoriously false, or utterly incredible, such as in Europe would wholly invalidate their testimony."

How far the speculative principles which they embodied had this effect, has already been shown; we proceed to their more direct influence.

The gloomy superstition, which pervaded most of them, fostered ferocious and cruel dispositions.

The horrible practice of offering human sacrifices prevailed throughout every region of the heathen world, to a degree which is almost incredible; and it still prevails in many populous countries where Christianity has not yet been made known. There are incontestable proofs of its having subsisted among the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Persians, the Phenicians, and all the various nations of the east. It was one of the crying sins of the Canaanites. The contagion spread over every part of Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Greeks and Romans, though less involved in this guilt than many other nations, were not altogether untainted with it. On great and extraordinary occasions, they had recourse to what was esteemed the most efficacious and most meritorious sacrifice that could be offered to the gods, the effusion of human blood. (8) But among more barbarous nations, this practice took a firmer root. The Scythians and Thracians, the Gauls and the Germans, were strongly addicted to it; and our own island, under the gloomy and ferocious despotism of the Druids, was polluted with the religious murder of its inhabitants. In the semi-civilized kingdoms on the western side of Africa, as Dahomy, Ashantee, and others, many thousands fall every year victims to superstition. In America, Montezuma offered 20,000 victims yearly to the sun; and modern navigators have found the practice throughout the whole extent of the vast Pacific ocean. As for India, the cries of its abominable and cruel superstitions have been sounded repeatedly in the ears of the British public and its legislature; and including infants and widows, not fewer than 10,000 lives fall a sacrifice to idolatry in our eastern dominions yearly! (9)

The influence of these practices in obdurating the heart, and disposing it to habitual cruelty, need not be pointed out; but the religions of paganism have been as productive of impurity as of blood.

The *Floralia* among the Romans were celebrated for four days together by the most shameless actions; and their *mysteries* in every country, whatever might be their original intent, became horribly corrupt. It was in the temples of many of their deities, and on their religious festivals, that every kind of impurity was most practised; and this con-

(8) Plutarch in the Lives of Themistocles, Marcellus, and Aristides. (*Livy* l. 22, c. 57; *Florus* l. 1, c. 13; *Virg. Æn.* x, 518, xi, 81.)

(9) See Maurice's Indian Antiquities; the writings of Dr. Claudius Buchanan Ward on the Hindoos; Dubois on Hindoo Manners, &c; Robertson's History of America; Bowditch's Account of Ashantee; Moore's Hindoo Pantheon; and Porteus and Ryan on the Effects of Christianity.

tinues to the present day throughout all the regions of modern paganism. (1)

This immoral tendency of their religion was confirmed and perfected by the very character and actions of their gods, whose names were perpetually in their mouths; and whose murderous or obscene exploits, whose villanies and chicaneries, whose hatreds and strifes, were the subject of their popular legends; which made up in fact the only theology, if so it may be called, of the body of the people. That they should be better than their gods, was not to be expected, and worse they could not be. Deities with such attributes could not but corrupt, and be appealed to, not merely to excuse, but to sanctify the worst practices. (2)

Let this argument then be summed up.

All the leading doctrines on which religion rests, had either been corrupted by a grovelling and immoral superstition, among heathen nations; or the philosophic speculations of their wisest men had introduced principles destructive of man's accountability and present and future hope. On morals themselves, the original rules were generally perverted, limited, or rejected; while the religious rites, and the legendary character of the deities worshipped, to the exclusion of the true God, gave direct incitement and encouragement to vice. Thus the grossest ignorance on Divine subjects universally prevailed; the learned were involved in inextricable perplexities; and the unlearned received as truth the most absurd and monstrous fables, all of them, however, favourable to vicious indulgence. The actual state of morals also accorded with the corrupt religious systems, and the lax moral principles which they adopted; so that in every heathen state of ancient times, the description of the Apostle Paul in the first chapter of Romans is supported by the evidence of their own historians and poets. The same may also be affirmed of modern pagan countries, whose moral condition may explain more fully, as they are now so well known through our intercourse with them, the genius and moral tendency of the ancient idolatries, with which those of India, and other parts of the east especially, so exactly agree.

These are the facts. They affect not a small portion of mankind, but all who have not had the benefits of the doctrines and morals of the Holy Scriptures. There are no exceptions from this of any consequence

(1) See Leland and Whitby, on the Necessity of a Revelation; and the writers on the customs of India,—Ward, Dubois, Buchanan, and Moore, before referred to.

(2) Hence Chærea, in Terence, pertinently enough asks, *Quod fecit is qui templa cæli summa sonitu concutit, ego homuncio non facerem?* Eunuch. Act. 3, sec. 5. He only imitated Jupiter. And says Sextus Empyricus, "That cannot be unjust which is done by the god Mercury, the prince of thieves, for how can a god be wicked?" (*Apud. Euseb. Præp.* lib. 6, cap. 10.)

to the argument, though some difference in the morals of heathen states may be allowed. Where the Scriptures are unknown, there is not, nor ever has been since the corruption of the primitive religion, a religious system which has contained just views of God and religious truth, the Theists of the present day being judges;—none which has enjoined a correct morality, or even opposed any effectual barrier against the deterioration of public manners. These facts cannot be denied: for the allegations formerly made of the morality of modern pagan nations have been sufficiently refuted by a better acquaintance with them; and the conclusion is irresistible, that an express revelation of the will of God, accompanied with efficient corrective institutions, was become necessary, and is still demanded by the ignorance and vices, the miseries and disorders of every part of the earth into which Christianity has not been introduced.

But we may go another step. This exhibition of the moral condition of those nations who have not had the benefit of the renewal and republication of the truths of the patriarchal religion, not only supports the conclusion that new and direct revelations from God were necessary; but the *wants*, which that condition so obviously created, will support other presumptions as to the *nature* and *mode* of that revelation, in the case of such a gift being bestowed in the exercise of the Divine mercy, for if there is ground to presume that almighty God, in his compassion for his creatures, would not leave them to the unchecked influence of error and vice; nor, upon the corruption of that simple, but comprehensive doctrine, worship and morals, communicated to the progenitors of all those great branches of the family of man which have been spread over the earth, refuse to interpose to renew and to perfect that religious system which existed in an elementary form in the earliest ages, and give to it a form less liable to alteration and decay than when left to be transmitted by tradition alone; there is equal ground to presume, that the revelation, whenever vouchsafed, should be of that nature, and accompanied by such circumstances, as would most effectually accomplish this benevolent purpose.

Presumptions as to the manner in which such a revelation would be made most effectually to accomplish its ends, are indeed to be guarded, lest we should set up ourselves as adequate judges in a case which involves large views and extensive bearings of the Divine government But without violating this rule, it may, from the obviousness of the case, be presumed, that such a supernatural manifestation of truth should, 1, contain explicit information on those important subjects on which mankind had most greatly and most fatally erred. 2. That it should accord with the principles of former revelations, given to men in the same state of guilt and moral incapacity as we find them in the present day. 3. That it should have a satisfactory external authentication

4. That it should contain provisions for its effectual promulgation among all classes of men. All this, allowing the necessity and the probability of a supernatural communication of the will of God, must certainly be expected; and if the Christian revelation bears this character it has certainly these presumptions in its favour, that it meets an obvious case of necessity, and confers the advantages just enumerated.

1. It gives information on those subjects which are most important to man, and which the world had darkened with the greatest errors—*the nature and perfections, claims and relations of God—his* WILL (3) *as the* RULE *of moral good and evil—the means of obtaining* PARDON *and of conquering vice—the true* MEDIATOR *between God and man—Divine* PROVIDENCE—*the* CHIEF GOOD *of man*, respecting which alone more than three hundred different opinions among the ancient sages have been reckoned up—*man's* IMMORTALITY *and accountability, and a* FUTURE STATE

2. It is also required that a revelation should accord with the principles of former revelations, should any have been given.

For since it is a first principle that God cannot err himself, nor deceive us, so far as one revelation renews or explains any truth in a preceding one, it must agree with the previous communication; and in what it adds to a preceding revelation, it cannot contradict any thing which it contains, if it be exhibited as a truth of unchangeable character or a duty of perpetual obligation

Now whatever direct proof may be adduced in favour of the Divine authority of the Jewish and Christian revelations, this at least may be confidently urged as evidence in their favour, that they have a substantial agreement and harmony among themselves, and with that ancient traditional system which existed in the earliest ages, and the fragments of which we find scattered among all nations. As to the patriarchal system of religion, to which reference has been so often made, beside the notices of it which are every where scattered in the book of Genesis, we have ample and most satisfactory information in the ancient book of Job, of which sufficient evidence may be given that it was written not later than the time of Moses; and that Job himself lived between the flood of Noah and the call of Abraham. Of the religion of the patriarchs, as it existed just at that period when Sabianism, or the worship of the heavenly luminaries, began to make its appearance, and was restrained by the authority of the "*judges*," who were the heads of tribes or families, and as it existed in the preceding ages, as we find from the reference made by Job and his friends to the authority of their "*fathers*," this book contains an ample and most satisfactory record; and from this venerable relic a very copious body of doctrinal and practical theology might be collected; but the following particulars will be sufficient for the present argument:—

(3) See note A at the end of the chapter.

One Supreme Being alone is recognized throughout, as the object of adoration, worship, hope, trust, and fear; who is represented as of infinite and unsearchable majesty,—eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, and of perfect wisdom, justice, goodness; governing all things, noting and judging individuals, regarding the good, punishing the wicked, placable, listening to the prayers of the penitent. The natural corruption of man's nature is also stated; and his own inability to cleanse his heart from sin. Man, we are told, cannot be just with God, and therefore needs an intercessor. Sacrifices, as of Divine appointment, and propitiatory in their nature, are also adverted to as commonly practised. Express reference is made to a Divine Redeemer and his future incarnation, as an object of hope. The doctrines of an immortal spirit in man, and of the resurrection of the body, and a future judgment, have all a place in this system. Creation is ascribed to God; and not only the general doctrine of Providence, but that most interesting branch of it, the connection of dispensations of prosperity and affliction with moral ends. Murder, theft, oppression, injustice, adultery, intemperance, are all pointed out as violations of the laws of God; and also wrath, envy, and other evil passions. Purity of heart, kindness, compassion to the poor, &c, are spoken of as virtues of the highest obligation; and the fear and love of God are enjoined, with a calm and cheerful submission to his will, in humble trust that the darkness of present events will be ultimately cleared up, and shown to be consistent with the wisdom, justice, holiness, and truth of God. The same points of doctrine and morals may also be collected from the book of Genesis.

Such was the comprehensive system of patriarchal theology; and it is not necessary to stop to point out, that these great principles are all recognized and taken up in the successive revelations by Moses and by Christ,—exhibiting *three religious systems, varying greatly in circumstances; introduced at widely distant periods, and by agents greatly differing in their condition and circumstances; but exactly harmonizing in every leading doctrinal tenet, and agreeing in their great moral impression upon mankind*—PERFECT PURITY OF HEART AND CONDUCT.

3 That it should be accompanied with an explicit and impressive *external authentication*, of such a nature as to make its truth obvious to the mass of mankind, and to leave no reasonable doubt of its Divine authority.

The reason of this is evident. A mere impression of truth on the understanding could not by itself be distinguished from a discovery made by the human intellect, and could have no authority, as a declaration of the will of a superior, with the person receiving it; and as to others, it could only pass for the opinion of the individual who might promulge it. (*Vide chap.* 3.) An authentication of a system of truth, which professes to be the *will*, the *law*, of him who, having made, has the right to com

mand us, *eterna* .. .. matter of the doctrine itself, is therefore necessary to give it authority, and to create the obligation of obedience. This accords with the opinion of all nations up to the earliest ages, and was so deeply wrought in the common sense of mankind, that all the heathen legislators of antiquity affected a Divine commission, and all false religions have leaned for support upon pretended supernatural sanctions. The proofs of this are so numerous and well known, that it is unnecessary to adduce them.

The authority of the ancient patriarchal religion rested on proof external to itself. We do not now examine the truth of its alleged authentications,—they were admitted; and the force of the revelation depended upon them in the judgment of mankind. We have a most ancient book, which records the opinions of the ante-Mosaic ages. The theology of those ages has been stated; and from the history contained in that book we learn, that the received opinion was, that the almighty Lawgiver himself conversed with our first parents and with the patriarchs, under celestial appearances; and that his mercies to men, or his judgments, failed not to follow ordinarily the observance or violation of the laws thus delivered, which was in fact an authentication of them renewed from time to time. The course of nature, displaying the eternal power and Godhead, as well as the visitations of Providence, was to them a constant confirmation of several of the leading truths in the theology they had received; and by the deep impress of Divinity which this system received in the earliest ages from the attestations of singular judgments, and especially the flood, it is only rationally to be accounted for, that it was universally transmitted, and waged so long a war against religious corruptions.

But notwithstanding the authentication of the primitive religion, as a matter of Divine revelation, and the effects produced by it in the world for many ages, and indeed still produced by it in its very broken and corrupted state, in condemning many sinful actions, so as to render the crimes of heathens without excuse; that system was traditional, and liable to be altered by transmission. In proportion also as historical events were confounded by the lapse of time, and as the migrations and political convulsions of nations gave rise to fabulous stories, the external authenticating evidence became weak, and thus a merciful interposition on the part of God was, as we have seen, rendered necessary by the general ignorance of mankind. Indeed the primitive revelations supposed future ones, and were not in themselves regarded as complete. But if a republication only of the truth had been necessary, the old external evidence was so greatly weakened by the lapse of ages, which as to most nations had broken the line of historical testimony on which it so greatly rested, that it required a new authentication, in a form adapted to the circumstances of the world; and if

an enlarged revelation were vouchsafed, every addition to the declared will of God needed an authentication of the same kind as at first.

If we presume, therefore, that a new revelation was necessary, we must presume, that, when given, it would have an external authentication as coming from God, from which there could be no reasonable appeal; and we therefore conclude, that as the Mosaic and Christian revelations profess both to republish and to enlarge former revelations, the circumstance of their resting their claims on the external evidence of miracles and prophecy, is a presumption in their favour. Whether the evidence which they offer be decisive or not, is a future question; but in exhibiting such evidence, they accord with the reason of the thing, and with the common sense of all ages.

4. It is farther presumed, that, should a revelation of religious truth and the will of God be made, it would provide means for its effectual communication to all classes of men.

As the revelation supposed must be designed to restore and enlarge the communications of truth, and as, from the increase and dispersion of the human race, tradition had become an imperfect medium of conveying it, it is a fair presumption, that the persons through whom the communication was made should record it in WRITING. A revelation to every individual could not maintain the force of its original authentication; because as its attestation must be of a supernatural kind, its constant recurrence would divest it of that character, or weaken its force by bringing it among common and ordinary events. A revelation on the contrary to few, properly and publicly attested by supernatural occurrences, needed not repetition; but the most natural and effectual mode of preserving the communication, once made, would be to transmit it by writing. Any corruption of the record would be rendered impracticable by its being publicly taught in the first instance; by a standard copy being preserved with care; or by such a number of copies being dispersed as to defy material alteration. This presumption is realized also in the Jewish and Christian revelations; as will be seen when the subject of the authority of the Holy Scriptures comes to be discussed. They were first publicly taught, then committed to writing, and the copies were multiplied.

Another method of preserving and diffusing the knowledge of a revelation once made, would be, the institution of public commemorative rites, at once preserving the memory of the fact, and of the doctrine connected with it, among great bodies of people, and leading them to such periodical inquiries as might preserve both with the greatest accuracy. These also we find in the institutions of Moses, and of Christ; and their weight in the argument for the truth of the mission of each, will be adduced in its proper place.

Allowing it to be reasonable to presume, that a revelation would be

vouchsafed; it is equally so to presume, that it should contain some injunctions favourable to its propagation among men of all ranks. For as the compassion of God to the moral necessities of his creatures, generally, is the ground on which so great a favour rests, we cannot suppose that one class of men should be allowed to make a monopoly of this advantage; and this would be a great temptation to them to publish their own favourite or interested opinions under a pretended Divine sanction, and tend to counteract the very purpose for which a revelation was given. Such a monopoly was claimed by the priests of ancient pagan nations; and that fatal effect followed. It was claimed for a time by a branch of the Christian priesthood, contrary to the obligations of the institution itself; and the consequences were similar. Among the heathens, the effect of this species of monopoly was, that those who encouraged superstition and ignorance among the people, speedily themselves lost the truth, which, through a wicked policy, they concealed; and the case might have been the same in Christendom, but for the sacred records, and for those witnesses to the truth who prophesied and suffered, more or less, throughout the darkest ages. (4)

This reasonable expectation also is realized in the Mosaic and Christian revelations;—both provided for their general publication—both instituted an order of men, not to conceal, but to *read* and *teach* the truth committed to them—both recognized a right in the people to search the record, and by it to judge of the ministration of the priests—both made it obligatory on the people to be taught—and both separated one day in seven to afford leisure for that purpose.

Nothing but such a revelation, and with such accompanying circumstances, appears capable of reaching the actual case of mankind, and of effectually instructing and bringing them under moral control; (5) and, whether the Bible can be proved to be of Divine authority or not, this at least must be granted, that it presents itself to us under these circumstances, and claims, for this very reason, the most serious and unprejudiced attention.

(4) Bishop Warburton endeavours to prove, by an elaborate argument in his "Divine Legation," that in the *Greater* Mysteries, the Divine Unity and the errors of Polytheism were constantly taught. This, however, is most satisfactorily disproved by Dr. Leland, in his "Advantage and Necessity of a Divine Revelation;" to both of which works the reader is referred for information as to these singular institutions—the heathen mysteries.

(5) See note B at the end of the chapter.

Note A.—Page 63.

Different opinions have been held as to the ground of moral obligation. Grotius, Balguy, and Dr. S. Clarke, place it in the *eternal and necessary fitness of things*. To this there are two objections. The *First* is, that it leaves the distinction between virtue and vice, in a great measure, arbitrary and indefinite, dependent upon our *perception* of fitness and unfitness, which, in different individuals, will greatly differ. The *Second* is, that when a fitness or unfitness is proved, it is no more than the discovery of a natural essential difference or congruity, which alone cannot constitute a moral obligation to choose what is fit, and to reject what is unfit. When we have proved a fitness in a certain course of action, we have not proved that it is obligatory. A second step is necessary before we can reach this conclusion. Cudworth, Butler, Price, and others, maintain, that virtue carries its own obligation in itself; *that the understanding at once perceives a certain action to be right, and therefore it ought to be performed.* Several objections lie to this notion. 1. It supposes the understandings of men to determine precisely in the same manner concerning all virtuous and vicious actions, which is contrary to fact. 2. It supposes a previous rule, by which the action is determined to be right; but if the revealed will of God is not to be taken into consideration, what common rule exists among men? There is evidently no such rule, and therefore no means of certainly determining what is right. 3. If a common standard were known among men, and if the understandings of men determined in the same manner as to the conformity, or otherwise, of an action to that standard; what renders it a matter of *obligation* that any one should perform it? The rule must be proved to be binding, or no ground of obligation is established.

An action is obligatory, say others, because it is agreeable to the *moral sense*. This is the theory of Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Hutchinson. By moral sense appears to be meant an instinctive approbation of right, and abhorrence of wrong, prior to all reflection on their nature, or their consequences. If any thing else were understood by it, then the moral sense must be the same with conscience, which we know to vary with the judgment, and cannot therefore be the basis of moral obligation. If conscience be not meant, then the moral sense must be considered as *instinctive*, a notion, certainly, which is disproved by the whole moral history of man. It may, indeed, be conceded, that such is the constitution of the human soul, that when those distinctions between actions, which have been taught by religious tradition or direct revelation, are known in their nature, relations, and consequences, the calm and sober judgments of men will approve of them; and that especially when they are considered abstractedly, that is, as not affecting and controlling their own interests and passions immediately, virtue may command complacency, and vice provoke abhorrence; but that, independent of reflection on their nature or their consequences, there is an instinctive principle in man which abhors evil, and loves good, is contradicted by that variety of opinion and feeling on the vices and virtues, which obtains among all uninstructed nations. We applaud the forgiveness of an injury as magnanimous; a savage despises it as mean. We think it a duty to support and cherish aged parents; many nations, on the contrary, abandon them as useless, and throw them to the beasts of the field. Innumerable instances of this contrariety might be adduced, which are all contrary to the notion of instinctive sentiment. Instincts operate uniformly, but this assumed moral sense does not. Beside, if it be mere matter of feeling, independent of judgment, to love virtue, and abhor

nce, the *morality* of the exercise of this principle is questionable; for it would be difficult to show, that there is any more morality, properly speaking, in the affections and disgusts of instinct than in those of the palate. If judgment, the knowledge and comparison of things, be included, then this principle supposes a uniform and universal individual revelation, as to the nature of things, to every man, or an intuitive faculty of determining their moral quality; both of which are too absurd to be maintained.

The only satisfactory conclusion on this subject, is that which refers moral obligation to the *will of God*. "Obligation," says Warburton, "necessarily implies an obliger, and the obliger must be different from, and not one and the same with, the obliged. Moral obligation, that is, the obligation of a free agent, farther implies a law, which enjoins and forbids; but a law is the imposition of an intelligent superior, who hath power to exact conformity thereto." This lawgiver is God: and whatever may be the reasons which have led him to enjoin this, and to prohibit that, it is plain that the obligation to obey lies not merely in the fitness and propriety of a creature obeying an infinitely wise and good Creator, though such a fitness exists; but in that obedience being enjoined.

Some, allowing this, would push the matter farther, in search of a more remote ground of obligation. They put the question, "Why am I obliged to obey the will of God?" and give us the answer, "Because obedience to the commands of a benevolent God must be productive of the agent's happiness on the whole." But this is putting out to sea again; for, 1. It cannot be proved that the consideration of our own happiness is a ground of moral obligation at all, except in some such vague sense as we use the term obligation when we say, "We are obliged to take exercise, if we would preserve our health." 2. We should be in danger of setting up a standard, by which to judge of the propriety of obeying God, when, indeed, we are but inadequate judges of what is for our happiness, on the whole: or. 3. It would make moral obligation to rest upon our *faith*, that God can will only our happiness, which is a singular principle on which to build our obedience. On the contrary, the simple principle that moral obligation rests upon the will of God, by whatever means that will may be known, is unclogged with any of these difficulties. For, 1. It is founded on a clear principle of justice. He who made has an absolute property in us, and may therefore command us; and having actually commanded us, we cannot set up any claim of exemption—we are *his*. 2. He has connected reward with obedience, and punishment with disobedience, and therefore made it *necessary* for us to obey, if we would secure our own happiness. Thus we are *obliged*, both by the force of the abstract principle, and by the motive resulting from a sanctioned command; or, in the language of the schools, we are *obliged in reason*, and *obliged in interest*, but each obligation evidently emanates from the *will of God*. Other considerations, such as the excellence and beauty of virtue, its tendency to individual happiness and universal order, &c, may smooth the path of obedience, and render "his commandments joyous;" but the *obligation*, strictly speaking, can only rest in the will of the superior and commanding power.

Note B.—Page 67.

Though some will allow the ignorance of former times, they think that the improved reason of man is now more adequate to the discovery of moral truth.

"They contend, that the world was then in the infancy of knowledge; and argue, as if the illustrious sages of old, (whom they nevertheless sometimes extol,

in terms of extravagant panegyric.) were very babes in philosophy, such as the wise ones of later ages regard with a sort of contemptuous commiseration.

"But, may we not be permitted to ask, whence this assumed superiority of modern over ancient philosophers has arisen? and whence the extraordinary influx of light upon these latter times has been derived? Is there any one so infatuated by his admiration of the present age, as seriously to think, that the intellectual powers of man are stronger and more perfect now than they were wont to be, or that the particular talents of himself, or any of his contemporaries, are superior to those which shone forth in the luminaries of the Gentile world? Do the names even of Locke, Cudworth, Cumberland, Clarke, Wilkins, or Wollaston, (men so justly eminent in modern times, and who laboured so indefatigably to perfect the theory of natural religion,) convey to us an idea of greater intellectual ability than those of the consummate masters of the Portico, the Grove, or the Lyceum? How is it, then, that the advocates for the natural perfection, or perfectibility, of human reason, do not perceive, that for all the superiority of the present over former times, with respect to religious knowledge, we must be indebted to some *intervening cause*, and not to any actual enlargement of the human faculties? Is it to be believed, that any man of the present age, of whatever natural talents he may be possessed, could have advanced one step beyond the heathen philosophers in his pursuit of Divine truth, had he lived in *their* times, and enjoyed only the light that was bestowed upon *them*? Or can it be fairly proved, that, merely by the light of nature, or by reasoning upon such data only as men possess who never heard of revealed religion, any moral or religious truth has been discovered since the days when Athens and Rome affected to give laws to the intellectual, as well as to the political world? That great improvements have since been made, in framing systems of ethics, of metaphysics, and of what is called natural theology, need not be denied. But these improvements may easily be traced to one obvious cause, the widely diffused light of the Gospel, which, having shone, with more or less lustre, on all nations, has imparted, even to the most simple and illiterate of the sons of men, such a degree of knowledge on these subjects, as, without it, would be unattainable by the most learned and profound." (VAN MILDERT'S *Boyle's Lect.*)

CHAPTER IX.

THE EVIDENCES NECESSARY TO AUTHENTICATE A REVELATION.—*External Evidence.*

THE evidence usually offered in proof of the Divine authority of the Scriptures, may be divided into EXTERNAL, INTERNAL, and COLLATERAL. The external evidence consists of miracles and prophecy, the internal evidence is drawn from the consideration of the doctrines taught, as being consistent with the character of God, and tending to promote the virtue and happiness of man; and the collateral evidence arises from a variety of circumstances, which, less directly than the former, prove the revelation to be of Divine authority, but are yet supposed to be of great weight in the argument. On each of these kinds of evidence we shall offer some general remarks, tending to prepare the way for a demonstration of the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

The principal and most appropriate evidences of a revelation from God, must be *external* to the revelation itself. This has been before stated; but it may require a larger consideration.

A Divine revelation has been well defined to be "a discovery of some proposition to the mind, which came not in by the usual exercise of its faculties, but by some miraculous Divine interposition and attestation, either mediate or immediate." (DODDRIDGE's *Lectures*, part 5 definition 68.) It is not thought necessary to attempt to prove such a revelation possible; for, as our argument is supposed to be with a person who acknowledges, not only that there is a God, but that he is the Creator of men; it would be absurd in such a one to deny, that he who gave us minds capable of knowledge is not able, instantly and immediately, to convey knowledge to us; and that he who has given us the power of communicating ideas to each other, should have no means of communicating with us immediately from himself.

We need not inquire whether external evidence of a revelation is in all cases requisite to him who immediately and at first receives it; for the question is not, whether private revelations have ever been made by God to individuals, and what evidence is required to authenticate them; but what is the kind of evidence which we ought to require of one who professes to have received a revelation of the will of God, with a command to communicate it to us, and to enjoin it upon our acceptance and submission, as the rule of our opinions and manners.

He may believe that a divine communication has been made to himself; but *his* belief has no authority to command *ours*. He may have actually received it; but we have not the means of knowing it without *proof*.

That proof is not the high and excellent nature of the truths he teaches: in other words, that which is called the *internal evidence* cannot be that proof. For we cannot tell whether the doctrines he teaches, though they should be capable of a higher degree of rational demonstration than any delivered to the world before, may not be the fruits of his own mental labour. *He* may be conscious that they are not; but *we* have no means of knowing that of which he is conscious, except by his own testimony. To us therefore they would have no authority but as the opinions of a man, whose intellectual attainments we might admire, but to whom we could not submit as to an infallible guide; and the less so, if any part of the doctrine taught by him were either mysterious and above our reason, or contrary to our interests, prejudices, and passions.

If therefore any person should profess to have received a revelation of truth from God to teach to mankind, and that he was directed to command their obedience to it on pain of the Divine displeasure, he would be asked for some external authentication of his mission; nor would the reasonableness and excellence of his doctrines be accepted in place of

this. The latter might entitle him to attention; but nothing short of the former would be thought a ground sufficiently strong for yielding to him an absolute obedience. Without it he might reason, and be heard with respect; but he could not *command*. On this very reasonable ground, the Jews, on one occasion, asked our Lord, "*By what* authority *doest thou these things?*" and on another, "*What* sign *showest thou unto us?*"

Agreeably to this, the authors both of the Jewish and the Christian revelations profess to have authenticated their mission by the two great external proofs, MIRACLES and PROPHECY; and it remains to be considered whether this kind of authentication be reasonably sufficient to command our faith and obedience.

The question is not, Whether we may not conceive of external proofs of the mission of Moses, and of Christ and his apostles, differing from those which are assumed to have been given, and more convincing. In whatever way the authentication had been made, we might have conceived of modes of proof differing in kind or more ample in circumstance; so that to ground an objection upon the absence of a particular kind of proof for which we have a preference, would be trifling. (6) But this is the question, Is a mission to teach the will of

(6) "We know not beforehand what degree or kind of *natural* information it were to be expected God would afford men, each by his own reason and experience, nor how far he would enable and effectually dispose them to communicate it, whatever it should be, to each other; nor whether the evidence of it would be certain, highly probable, or doubtful; nor whether it would be given with equal clearness and conviction to all. Nor could we guess, upon any good ground I mean, whether natural knowledge, or even the faculty itself, by which we are capable of attaining it, reason, would be given us at once, gradually. In like manner we are wholly ignorant what degree of new knowledge, it were to be expected, God would give mankind, by revelation, upon supposition of his affording one; or how far, or in what way, he would interpose miraculously to qualify them, to whom he should originally make the revelation, for communicating the knowledge given by it, and to secure their doing it to the age in which they should live, and to secure its being transmitted to posterity. We are equally ignorant whether the evidence of it would be certain, or highly probable, or doubtful: or whether all who should have any degree of instruction from it, and any degree of evidence of its truth, would have the same; or whether the scheme would be revealed at once, or unfolded gradually. Nay, we are not, in any sort, able to judge whether it were to have been expected, that the revelation should have been committed to writing, or left to be handed down, and consequently corrupted, by verbal tradition, and, at length, sunk under it, if mankind so pleased, and during such time as they are permitted, in the degree they evidently are, to act as they will.

"Now, since it has been shown that we have no principles of reason upon which to judge beforehand, how it were to be expected revelation should have been left, or what was most suitable to the Divine plan of government in any of the forementioned respects; it must be quite frivolous to object afterward as to any of them, against its being left one way rather than another; for this would be to object against things, upon account of their being different from our ex

God to man, under his immediate authority, sufficiently authenticated when *miracles* are really performed, and *prophecies* actually and unequivocally accomplished? To this point only the inquiry need now go; for whether real miracles were performed by Moses and Christ, and whether prophecies were actually uttered by them, and received unequivocal accomplishment, will be reserved for a farther stage of the inquiry.

There is a *popular* a *philosophic*, and a *theological* sense of the term miracle.

A miracle, in the *popular* sense, is a prodigy, or an extraordinary event, which surprises us by its novelty. In a more accurate and *philosophic* sense, a miracle is an effect which does not follow from any of the regular laws of nature, or which is inconsistent with some known law of it, or contrary to the settled constitution and course of things. Accordingly, all miracles presuppose an established system of nature, within the limits of which they operate, and with the order of which they disagree.

Of a miracle in the *theological* sense, many definitions have been given. (7) That of Dr. Samuel Clarke is,—"A miracle is a work effected in a manner unusual, or different from the common and regular method of providence, by the interposition of God himself, or of some intelligent agent superior to man, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person."

Mr. Horne defines a miracle to be "an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the assistance, or by the permission of God." (*Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures*, vol. 1, c. 4, sec. 2.) This definition would be more complete in the theological sense, if the last clause in Dr. S. Clarke's definition were added to it, "for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine,

pectations, which has been shown to be without reason. And thus we see that the only question concerning the truth of Christianity is, whether it be a real revelation; not whether it be attended with every circumstance which we should have looked for; and concerning the authority of Scripture, whether it be what it claims to be; not whether it be a book of such sort, and so promulged as weak men are apt to fancy a book containing a Divine revelation should be. And, therefore, neither obscurity, nor seeming inaccuracy of style, nor various readings, nor early disputes about the authors of particular parts, nor any other things of the like kind, though they had been much more considerable in degree than they are, could overthrow the authority of the Scripture, unless the prophets, apostles, or our Lord, had promised, that the book, containing the Divine revelation, should be secure from those things." (BUTLER'S *Analogy*.)

(7) The reader may see several of them enumerated and examined in Doddridge's Lectures, part 5.

or in attestation of the authority of some particular person." With this addition the definition will be sufficiently satisfactory, as it explains the nature of the phenomenon, and gives the reason or end of its occurrence

Farmer, in his "Dissertation on Miracles," denies to any created intelligences, however high, the power of working miracles, when acting from themselves alone. This dispute is only to be settled by a strict definition of terms; but whatever power may be allowed to superior beings to produce miraculous effects, or effects apparently so, by the control they may be supposed to exert over natural objects; yet, as they are all under the government of God, they have certainly no power to interfere with his work, and the order of his providence, at pleasure. Whatever they do, therefore, whether by virtue of natural power, or power specially communicated, they must do it by commission, or at least by license.

The miracles under consideration are such effects as agree with the definition just given, and which are wrought either immediately by God himself, to attest the Divine mission of particular persons, and to authenticate their doctrines; or by superior beings commissioned by him for the same purpose; or by the persons themselves who profess this Divine authority, in order to prove that they have been invested with it by God.

The possibility of miracles wrought by the power of God, can be denied by none but Atheists, or those whose system is substantially Atheistic. Spinosa denies that any power can supersede that of nature; or that any thing can disturb or interrupt the order of things: and accordingly he defines a miracle to be "a rare event happening in consequence of some laws that are unknown to us." This is a definition of a prodigy, not of a miracle; but if miracles in the proper sense be allowed, that is, if the facts themselves which have been commonly called miraculous be not disputed, this method of accounting for them is obviously most absurd; inasmuch as it is supposed that these unknown laws *chanced* to come into operation, just when men professing to be endued with miraculous powers wished them, while yet such laws were to them unknown. For instance, when Moses contended with the Egyptian magicians, though these laws were unknown to him, he ventured to depend upon their operation, and by chance they served his purpose.

To one who believes in a Supreme Creator of all things, and the dependence of all things upon his power and will, miraculous interpositions must be allowed possible, nor is there any thing in them repugnant to our ideas of his wisdom and immutability, and the perfection of his works. They are departures from the ordinary course of God's operation; but this does not arise from any natural necessity, to remedy an unforeseen evil, or to repair imperfections in his work; the reasons for them are *moral* and not natural reasons, and the ends they are intended

to accomplish are moral ends. They remind us, when they occur, that there is a power superior to nature, and that all nature, even to its first and most uniform laws, depends upon Him. They are among the chief means by which he who is by nature invisible, makes himself as it were visible to his creatures, who are so prone to forget him entirely, or to lose sight of him by reason of the interposition of the veil of material objects. (8)

Granting then the possibility of miraculous interposition on the part of the great Author of nature, on special occasions, and for great ends, in what way and under what circumstances does such an interposition authenticate the Divine mission of those who profess to be sent by him to teach his will to mankind?

The argument is, that as the known and established course of nature has been fixed by him who is the Creator and Preserver of all things, it can never be violated, departed from, or controlled, but either immedi-

(8) Bishop Butler has satisfactorily shown, in his Analogy, (part ii, c. 11,) that there can be no such presumption against miracles as to render them, in any wise, incredible, but what would conclude against such uncommon appearances as comets, and against there being any such powers in nature as magnetism and electricity, so contrary to the properties of other bodies not endued with these powers. But he observes, "Take in the consideration of religion, or the *moral system* of the world, and then we see distinct, particular reasons for miracles, to afford mankind instruction, additional to that of nature, and to attest the truth of it; and our being able to discern reasons for them, gives a *positive credibility* to the history of them, in cases where those reasons hold."

"It is impossible," says an oracle among modern unbelievers, (Voltaire,) "that a Being, infinitely wise, should make laws in order to violate them. He would not derange the machine of his own construction, unless it were for its improvement. But as a God, he hath, without doubt, made it as perfect as possible; or, if he had foreseen any imperfection likely to result from it, he would surely have provided against it from the beginning, and not be under a necessity of changing it afterward. He is both unchangeable and omnipotent, and therefore can neither have any desire to alter the course of nature, nor have any need to do so."

"This argument," says Dr. Van Mildert, "is grounded on a misconception or a misrepresentation of the *design* of miracles, which is not the remedy of any *physical* defect, not to rectify any original or accidental imperfections in the laws of nature, but to manifest to the world the interposition of the Almighty, for especial purposes of a *moral* kind. It is simply *to make known to mankind*, that it is he who addresses them, and that whatever is accompanied with this species of evidence, comes from him, and claims their implicit belief and obedience. The perfection, therefore, or imperfection, of the laws of nature has nothing to do with the question. All nature is subservient to the will of God; and as his *existence* and *attributes* are manifest in the ordinary course of nature, so, in the *extraordinary* work of miracles, his *will* is manifested by the display of his absolute sovereignty over the course of nature. Thus, in both instances, the Creator is glorified in his works; and it is made to appear, that 'by him all things consist,' and that 'for his pleasure they are, and were created.' This seems a sufficient answer to any reasoning, *a priori*, against miracles, from their supposed inconsistency with the Divine perfections."

ately by himself, or mediately by other beings at his command, and by his assistance or permission; for if this be not allowed, we must deny either the Divine omnipotence, or his natural government; and, if these be allowed, the other follows. Every real miracle is a work of God, done specially by him, by his permission, or with his concurrence.

In order to distinguish a real miracle, it is necessary that the common course of nature should be understood; for without some antecedent knowledge of the operation of physical causes, an event might be deemed miraculous which was merely strange, and through our ignorance inexplicable. Should an earthquake happen in a country never before visited by such a calamity within the memory of man, by the ignorant it might be considered miraculous; whereas an earthquake is a regular effect of the present established laws of nature.

But as the course of nature and the operation of physical causes are but partially understood, and will perhaps never be fully comprehended by the most inquiring minds, it seems necessary that such miracles as are intended to authenticate any religious system, promulged for the common benefit of mankind, should be effects produced upon objects whose properties have been the subject of common and long observation; that it should be contrary to some known laws by which the objects in question have been uniformly and long observed to be governed; or that the proximate cause of the effect should be known to have no adequate power or adaptation to produce it. When these circumstances occur separately, and more especially when combined, a sufficient antecedent acquaintance with the course of nature exists to warrant the conclusion, *that the effect is miraculous*, or, in other words, that it is produced by the special interposition of God.

Whether the works ascribed to Moses and to Christ, and recorded in Scripture were actually performed by them, will be considered in another place; but here it is proper to observe, that, assuming their actual occurrence, they are of such a nature as to leave no reasonable doubt of their miraculous character; and from them we may borrow a few instances for the sake of illustrating the preceding observations, without prejudging the argument.

The rod cast from the hand of Moses becomes a serpent. Here the *subject* was well known; it was a rod, a branch separated from a tree, and it was obviously contrary to the known and established course of nature, that it should undergo so signal a transformation. If the fact can be proved, the miracle must therefore follow.

The sea is parted at the stretching out of the rod of Moses. Here is no adaptation of the proximate cause to produce the effect, which was obviously in opposition to the known qualities of water. A recession of the sea from the shores would have taken down the whole mass of water from the head of the gulf; but here the waters divide, and, con

trary to their nature, stand up on each side, leaving a passage for the host of Israel.

It is in the nature of clouds to be carried about by the wind; but the cloud which went before the Israelites in the wilderness, rested on their tabernacle, moved when they were commanded to march, and directed their course; rested when they were to pitch their tents, and was a pillar of direction by day; and, by night, when it is the nature of clouds to become dark, the rays of the sun no longer permeating them, this cloud shone with the brightness of fire.

In all these cases, if the facts be established, there can be no doubt as to their miraculous character.

"Were a physician instantly to give sight to a blind man, by anointing his eyes with a chemical preparation, to the nature and qualities of which we were absolute strangers, the cure would to us, undoubtedly, be wonderful; but we could not pronounce it miraculous, because it might be the physical effect of the operation of the unguent upon the eye. But were he to give sight to his patient, merely by commanding him to receive it, or by anointing his eyes with spittle, we should, with the utmost confidence, pronounce the cure to be a miracle; because we know perfectly, that neither the human voice nor human spittle has, by the established constitution of things, any such power over the diseases of the eye. No one is ignorant, that persons, apparently dead, are often restored to their families and friends, by being treated, during suspended animation, in the manner recommended by the *Humane Society*. To the vulgar, and sometimes even to men of science, these resuscitations appear very *wonderful*; but as they are known to be effected by physical agency, they cannot be considered as miraculous deviations from the laws of nature. On the other hand, no one could doubt of his having witnessed a real miracle, who had seen a person, that had been four days dead, come alive out of the grave at the call of another, or who had even beheld a person exhibiting all the common *evidences* of death, instantly resuscitated, merely by being *desired* to live." (*Gleig's edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible*, vol. iii, p. 241.)

In all such instances, the common course of nature is sufficiently known to support the conclusion, that the power which thus interferes with, and controls it, and produces effects to which the visible, natural causes are known not to be adequate, is *God*. (9)

(9) It is observable, that no miracles appear to have been wrought by human agency before the time of Moses and Aaron, in whose days, not only had the world long existed, but consequently the course of nature had been observed for a long period: and farther, these first miracles were wrought among a refined and observant people, who had their philosophers, to whom the course of nature and the operation of physical causes, were subjects of keen investigation

But it is also necessary, in order to prove that even these miraculous events are authentications of a Divine mission, that a direct connection between the power of God, exerted in a miraculous act, and the messenger, and his message, should be established.

The following circumstances would appear sufficiently to establish such a connection:—1. When the miracles occur at the time when he who professes to have a Divine mission from God, is engaged in making known the will of God to mankind, by communicating the revelation he has received, and performing other acts connected with his office. 2. When, though they are works above human power, they are wrought by the messenger himself, or follow his volitions. The force of this argument may be thus exhibited:—

When such unequivocal miracles as those we have pointed out occur only in connection with an actual profession by certain persons, that they have a Divine authority to teach and command mankind, this is a strong presumption, that the works are wrought by God in order to authenticate this pretension; but when they are performed mediately by these persons themselves, by their own will, and for the express purpose of establishing their mission, inasmuch as they are allowed to be real miracles, which no power, but that of God, can effect, it is then clear that God is with them, and that his co-operation is an authenticating and visible seal upon their commission.

It is not necessary, in this stage, to specify the rules by which real and pretended miracles are to be distinguished; nor to inquire, whether the Scriptures allow, that, in some cases, miracles have been wrought in support of falsehood. Both these subjects will be examined when we come to speak of the miracles of Scripture. The ground established is, that miracles are possible; and that, when real miracles occur under the circumstances we have mentioned, they are satisfactory evidences of a Divine mission.

But though this should be allowed, and also that the eye witnesses of such miracles would be bound to admit the proof, it has been made a question, whether their testimony affords sufficient reason to others to admit the fact that such events actually took place, and consequently whether we are bound to acknowledge the authority of that mission, in attestation of which the miracles are said to have been wrought.

If this be admitted, the benefits of a revelation must be confined to those who witnessed its attestation by miracle, or similar attestation must be afforded to every individual; for, as no revelation can be a benefit unless it possess Divine authority, which alone can infallibly mark the distinction between truth and error, should the authentication be partial, the benefit of the communication of an infallible doctrine must also be partial. We are all so much interested in this, because no religious system can plead the authentication of perpetual miracle,

that it deserves special consideration. Either this principle is unsound, or we must abandon all hope of discovering a religion of Divine authority.

As miracles are facts, they, like other facts, may be reported to others; and, as in the case of the miracles in question, bearing the characters which have been described, the competency of any man of ordinary understanding to determine whether they were actually wrought cannot be doubted; if the witnesses are credible, it is reasonable that their testimony should be admitted: for if the testimony be such as, in matters of the greatest moment to us in the affairs of common life, we should not hesitate to act upon; if it be such, that, in the most important affairs, men do uniformly act upon similar or even weaker testimony; it would be mere perverseness to reject it in the case in question; and would argue rather a disinclination to the doctrine which is thus proved, than any rational doubt of the sufficiency of the proof itself.

The objection is put in its strongest form by Mr. Hume, in his Essays, and the substance of it is,—*Experience* is the ground of the credit we give to human testimony; but this experience is by no means constant, for we often find men prevaricate and deceive. On the other hand, it is *experience*, in like manner, which assures us of those laws of nature, in the violation of which the notion of a miracle consists; but this experience is constant and uniform. A miracle is an event which, from its nature, is inconsistent with our experience; but the falsehood of testimony is not inconsistent with experience: it is contrary to experience that miracles should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false; and, therefore, no human testimony can, in any case, render them credible.

This argument has been met at large by many authors, (1) but the following extracts afford ample refutation:—

"The principle of this objection is, that it is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true; but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false.

"Now there appears a small ambiguity in the term 'experience,' and in the phrases 'contrary to experience,' or 'contradicting experience,' which it may be necessary to remove in the first place. Strictly speaking, the narrative of a fact is *then* only contrary to experience, when the fact is related to have existed at a time and place; at which time and place, we, being present, did not perceive it to exist; as if it should be asserted that, in a particular room, and at a particular hour of a certain day, a man was raised from the dead; in which room,

(1) See CAMPBELL'S Dissertation on Miracles; PRICE'S Four Dissertations, Diss. 4; PALEY'S Evidences; ADAM'S Essay on Miracles; Bishop DOUGLASS'S Criterion; DWIGHT'S Theology, vol. ii; Dr. HEY'S Norrisian Lectures, vol. i. VAN MILDERT'S Boyle's Lectures, vol. i.

and at the time specified, we being present and looking on, perceived no such event to have taken place.

"Here the assertion is contrary to experience, properly so called: and this is a contrariety which no evidence can surmount. It matters nothing whether the fact be of a miraculous nature or not. But although this be the experience and the contrariety, which Archbishop Tillotson alleged in the quotation with which Mr. Hume opens his Essay, it is certainly not that experience, nor that contrariety, which Mr. Hume himself intended to object. And, short of this, I know no intelligible signification which can be affixed to the term 'contrary to experience,' but one, viz., that of not having ourselves experienced any thing similar to the thing related, or such things not being generally experienced by others. I say, 'not generally;' for to state, concerning the fact in question, that no such thing was *ever* experienced, or that *universal* experience is against it, is to assume the subject of the controversy.

"Now the improbability which arises from the want (for this properly is a want, not a contradiction,) of experience, is only equal to the probability there is, that if the thing were true, we should experience things similar to it, or that such things would be generally experienced. Suppose it then to be true, that miracles were wrought upon the first promulgation of Christianity, when nothing but miracles could decide its authority, is it certain that such miracles would be repeated so often, and in so many places, as to become objects of general experience? Is it a probability approaching to certainty? Is it a probability of any great strength or force? Is it such as no evidence can encounter? And yet this probability is the exact *converse*, and therefore the exact measure of the improbability which arises from the want of experience, and which Mr. Hume represents as invincible by human testimony.

"It is not like alleging a new law of nature, or a new experiment in natural philosophy; because, when these are related, it is expected that, under the same circumstances, the same effect will follow universally; and in proportion as this expectation is justly entertained, the want of a corresponding experience negatives the history. But to expect concerning a miracle, that it should succeed upon a repetition, is to expect that which would make it cease to be a miracle, which is contrary to its nature as such, and would totally destroy the use and purpose for which it was wrought.

"The force of experience, as an objection to miracles, is founded in the presumption, either that the course of nature is invariable, or that, if it be ever varied, variations will be frequent and general. Has the necessity of this alternative been demonstrated? Permit us to call the course of nature the agency of an intelligent Being; and is there any good reason for judging this state of the case to be probable? Ought we not rather to expect, that such a Being, on occasions of peculiar

importance, may interrupt the order which he had appointed, yet, that such occasions should return seldom; that these interruptions, consequently, should be confined to the experience of a few; that the want of it, therefore, in many, should be matter neither of surprise nor objection?

"But as a continuation of the argument from experience, it is said, that when we advance accounts of miracles, we assign effects without causes, or we attribute effects to causes inadequate to the purpose, or to causes, of the operation of which we have no experience. Of what causes, we may ask, and of what effects does the objection speak? If it be answered, that when we ascribe the cure of the palsy to a touch, of blindness to the anointing of the eyes with clay, or the raising of the dead to a word, we lay ourselves open to this imputation; we reply, that we ascribe no such effects to such causes. We perceive no virtue or energy in these things more than in other things of the same kind. They are merely signs, to connect the miracle with its end. The effect we ascribe simply to the volition of the Deity; of whose existence and power, not to say of whose presence and agency, we have previous and independent proof. We have, therefore, all we seek for in the works of rational agents—a sufficient power, and an adequate motive. In a word, once believe that there is a God, and miracles are not incredible!

"Mr. Hume states the case of miracles to be, a contest of opposite improbabilities; that is to say, a question whether it be more improbable that the miracle should be true, or the testimony false; and this I think a fair account of the controversy. But herein I remark a want of argumentative justice, that, in describing the improbability of miracles, he suppresses all those circumstances of extenuation which result from our knowledge of the existence, power, and disposition of the Deity; his concern in the creation; the end answered by the miracle; the importance of that end, and its subserviency to the plan pursued in the works of nature. As Mr. Hume has represented the question, miracles are alike incredible to him who is previously assured of the constant agency of a Divine Being, and to him who believes that no such Being exists in the universe. They are equally incredible, whether related to have been wrought upon occasions the most deserving, and for purposes the most beneficial, or for no assignable end whatever, or for an end confessedly trifling or pernicious. This surely cannot be a correct statement. In adjusting also the other side of the balance, the strength and weight of testimony, this author has provided an answer to every possible accumulation of historical proof, by telling us that we are not obliged to explain how the story or the evidence arose. Now I think that we *are* obliged; not, perhaps, to show by positive accounts how it did, but by a probable hypothesis how it might so happen. The existence of the testimony is a phenomenon; the truth of the fact solves

the phenomenon. If we reject this solution, we ought to have some other to rest in; and none, even by our adversaries, can be admitted, which is not consistent with the principles that regulate human affairs and human conduct at present, or which makes men *then* to have been a different kind of beings from what they are *now*.

"But the short consideration which, independently of every other convinces me that there is no solid foundation for Mr. Hume's conclusion, is the following:—When a theorem is proposed to a mathematician, the first thing he does with it is to try it upon a simple case and if it produce a false result, he is sure that there is some mistake in the demonstration. Now, to proceed in this way with what may be called Mr. Hume's theorem,—If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived: if the governor of the country, hearing a rumour of this account, should call these men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture, or submit to be tied up to a gibbet; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burned, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account; still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say, that there exists not a skeptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity."—(PALEY'S *Evidences, Preparatory Considerations.*)

"The essayist," says the bishop of Llandaff, "who has most elaborately drawn out this argument, perplexes the subject, by attempting to adjust, in a sort of metaphysical balance of his own invention, the degrees of probability resulting from what he is pleased to call *opposite experiences*; viz. the experience of men's veracity, on the one hand, and the experience of the firm and unalterable constitution of the laws of nature, on the other. But the fallacy in this mode of reasoning is obvious. For, in the first place, miracles can, at most, only be contrary to the experience of those who never saw them performed: to say therefore, that they are contrary to *general* experience, (including, as it should seem, the experience even of those who profess to have seen and to have examined them,) is to assume the very point in question. And, in the next place, it is equally fallacious to allege against them the experience of the unalterable constitution of the laws of nature; because, unless the fact be previously investigated, whether those laws have ever been altered or suspended, this is likewise a gratuitous assumption.

"In truth this boasted balance of probabilities could only be employed

with effect, in the cause of infidelity, by counterpoising, against the testimony of those who professed to have seen miracles, the testimony of those (if any such were to be found) who, under the circumstances, and with the same opportunities of forming a judgment, professed to have been convinced, that the things which they saw were NOT miracles, but mere impostures and delusions. Here would be indeed experience against experience: and a skeptic might be well employed in estimating the comparative weight of the testimony on either side; in order to judge of the credibility or incredibility of the things proposed to his belief. But when he weighs only the experience of those, to whom the opportunity of judging of a miracle by personal observation has never been afforded, against the experience of those who declare themselves to be eye witnesses of the fact; instead of *opposite experiences*, properly so called, he is only balancing total *inexperience* on the one hand, against positive *experience* on the other.

"Nor will it avail any thing to say, that this particular inexperience of those who have never seen miracles, is compensated by their general experience of the unalterable course of nature. For, as we have already observed, this is altogether a mere *petitio principii*. It is arguing, upon a supposition wholly incapable of proof, that the course of nature is indeed so *unalterably* fixed, that even God himself, by whom its laws were ordained, *cannot*, when he sees fit, suspend their operation.

"There is therefore a palpable fallacy, (however a subtle metaphysician may attempt to disguise it by ingenious sophistry,) in representing the *experience* of mankind as being *opposite* to the testimony on which our belief of miracles is founded. For, the *opposite* experiences, as they are called, are not *contradictory* to each other; since 'there is' (as has been justly observed) 'no inconsistency in believing them *both*.' A miracle necessarily supposes an established and *generally unaltered* (though not unalterable) course of things; for, in its interception of such a course lies the very essence of a miracle, as here understood. Our experience, therefore, of the course of nature leads us to expect its continuance, and to act accordingly; but it does not set aside any proofs, from valid testimony, of a deviation from it: neither can our being personally unacquainted with a matter of fact, which took place a thousand years ago, or in a distant part of the world, warrant us in disbelieving the testimony of personal witnesses of the fact. Common sense revolts at the absurdity of considering one man's ignorance or inexperience as a counterpoise to another man's knowledge and experience of a matter of fact. Yet on no better foundation does this favourite argument of infidels appear to rest."

The substance of Dr. Campbell's answer to Mr. Hume's argument has been thus given:—

"The evidence arising from human testimony is not solely derived

from experience: on the contrary, testimony has a natural influence on belief, antecedent to experience. The early and unlimited assent given to testimony by children, gradually contracts as they advance in life; it is therefore more consonant to truth to say, that our diffidence in testimony is the result of experience, than that our faith in it has this foundation. Beside, the uniformity of experience in favour of any fact is not a proof against its being reversed in a particular instance. The evidence arising from the single testimony of a man of known veracity, will go farther to establish a belief of its being actually reversed. If his testimony be confirmed by a few others of the same character, we cannot withhold our assent to the truth of it. Now, though the operations of nature are governed by uniform laws, and though we have not the testimony of our senses in favour of any violation of them; still, if in particular instances we have the testimony of thousands of our fellow creatures, and those, too, men of strict integrity, swayed by no motives of ambition or interest, and governed by the principles of common sense, that they were actually witnesses of these violations, the constitution of our nature obliges us to believe them.

"Mr. Hume's reasoning is founded upon too limited a view of the laws and course of nature. If we consider things duly, we shall find that lifeless matter is utterly incapable of obeying any laws, or of being endued with any powers; and, therefore, what is usually called the course of nature, can be nothing else than the arbitrary will and pleasure of God, acting continually upon matter according to certain rules of uniformity, still bearing a relation to contingencies. So that it is as easy for the Supreme Being to alter what men think the course of nature, as to preserve it. Those effects, which are produced on the world regularly and indesinently, and which are usually termed the works of nature, prove the constant providence of the Deity; those, on the contrary, which, upon any extraordinary occasion, are produced in such a manner as it is manifest could not have been either by human power, or by what is called chance, prove undeniably the immediate interposition of the Deity on that especial occasion. God, it must be recollected, is the Governor of the moral as well as of the physical world; and since the moral well being of the universe is of more consequence than its physical order and regularity, it follows obviously, that the laws, conformably with which the material world seems generally to be regulated, are subservient and may occasionally yield to the laws by which the moral world is governed. Although, therefore, a miracle is contrary to the usual course of nature, (and would indeed lose its beneficial effect if it were not so,) it cannot thence be inferred, that it is 'a violation of the laws of nature,' allowing the term to include a regard to moral tendencies. The laws by which a wise and holy God governs the world, cannot (unless he is pleased to reveal them) be learnt in any other way

than from testimony; since, on this supposition, nothing but testimony can bring us acquainted with the whole series of his dispensations; and this kind of knowledge is absolutely necessary previously to our correctly inferring those laws. Testimony, therefore, must be admitted as constituting the principal means of discovering the real laws by which the universe has been regulated; that testimony assures us, that the apparent course of nature has often been interrupted to produce important moral effects; and we must not at random disregard such testimony, because in estimating its credibility we ought to look almost infinitely more at the moral than at the physical circumstances connected with any particular event." (2)

Such evidence as that of miracles, transmitted to distant times by satisfactory testimony, a revelation may then receive. The *fitness* of this kind of evidence to render that revelation an instant and universal benefit, wherever it comes, is equally apparent; for, as Mr. Locke observes, (*Reasonableness of Christianity,*) "the bulk of mankind have not leisure nor capacity for demonstration, nor can they carry a *train* of proofs; but as to the Worker of miracles, all his commands become

(2) It would be singular, did we not know the inconsistencies of error, that Mr. Hume himself, as Dr. Campbell shows, gives up his own argument.

"I own," these are his words, "there may possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit a proof from human testimony, though perhaps [in this he is modest enough, he avers nothing; *perhaps*] it will be impossible to find any such in all the records of history." To this declaration he subjoins the following supposition:—"Suppose all authors, in all languages, agree that from the first of January, 1600, there was a total darkness over the whole earth for eight days; suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people; that all travellers who return from foreign countries, bring us accounts of the same traditions, without the least variation or contradiction: it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting of that fact, ought to receive it for certain, and ought to search for the causes whence it might be derived." Could one imagine that the person who had made the above acknowledgment, a person too who is justly allowed by all who are acquainted with his writings, to possess uncommon penetration and philosophical abilities, that this were the same individual who had so short a while before affirmed, that "a miracle," or a violation of the course of nature, "supported by any human testimony, is more properly a subject of derision than of argument."

The objection "that successive testimony diminishes, and that so rapidly as to command no assent after a few centuries at most," deserves not so full a refutation, since it is evident, that "testimony continues credible so long as it is transmitted with all those circumstances and conditions which first procured it a certain degree of merit among men. Who complains of a decay of evidence in relation to the actions of Alexander, Hannibal, Pompey, or Cæsar? We never hear persons wishing they had lived ages earlier, that they might have had better proof that Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon; that Darius was beaten in several battles by Alexander," &c. (See Dr. O. GREGORY'S Letters on the Christian Revelation, vol. i, p. 196.)

principles; there needs no other proof of what *he* says, but that *he* said it, and there needs no more than to *read* the inspired books to be instructed."

Having thus shown, that miracles are possible; that under certain circumstances their reality may be ascertained; that when accompanied by other circumstances which we have also mentioned, they are connected with a definite end, and connect themselves with the Divine mission of those who perform them, and with the truth of their doctrine; that as facts they are the subjects of human testimony, and that credible testimony respecting them lays a competent foundation for our belief in them, and in those revelations which they are clearly designed to attest,—the way is prepared for the consideration of the miracles recorded in Scripture.

PROPHECY is the other great branch of the external evidence of a revelation; and the nature and force of that kind of evidence may fitly be pointed out before either the miracles or prophecies of the Bible are examined: for by ascertaining the general principles on which this kind of evidence rests, the consideration of particular cases will be rendered more easy and satisfactory.

No argument *a priori* against the possibility of prophecy can be attempted by any one who believes in the existence and infinitely perfect nature of God.

The infidel author of "The Moral Philosopher," indeed, rather insinuates than attempts fully to establish a dilemma with which to perplex those who regard prophecy as one of the proofs of a Divine revelation. He thinks that either prophecy must respect "events necessary, as depending upon necessary causes, which might be certainly foreknown and predicted;" or that, if human actions are free, and effects contingent, the possibility of prophecy must be given up, as it implies foreknowledge, which, if granted, would render them necessary.

The first part of this objection would be allowed, were there no predictions to be adduced in favour of a professed revelation, except such as related to events which human experience has taught to be dependent upon some cause, the existence and necessary operation of which are within the compass of human knowledge. But to foretell such events would not be to prophesy, any more than to say, that it will be light tomorrow at noon, or that on a certain day and hour next year there will occur an eclipse of the sun or moon, when that event has been previously ascertained by astronomical calculation.

If, however, it were allowed, that all events depended upon a chain of necessary causes, yet, in a variety of instances, the argument from prophecy would not be at all affected; for the foretelling of necessary results in certain circumstances is beyond human intelligence, because they can only be known to Him by whose power those necessary

causes on which they depend have been arranged, and who has prescribed the times of their operation. To borrow a case, for the sake of illustration, from the Scriptures, though the claims of their predictions are not now in question; let us allow that such a prophecy as that of Isaiah respecting the taking of Babylon by Cyrus was uttered, as it purports to be, more than a century before Cyrus was born, and that all the actions of Cyrus and his army, and those of the Babylonian monarch and his people, were necessitated; is it to be maintained that the chain of necessitating causes running through more than a century could be traced by a *human* mind, so as to describe the precise manner in which that fatality would unfold itself, even to the turning of the river, the drunken carousal of the inhabitants, and the neglect of shutting the gates of the city? This, being by uniform and universal experience known to be above all human apprehension, would therefore prove that the prediction was made in consequence of a communication from a superior and Divine Intelligence. Were events therefore subjected to invincible fate and necessity, there might nevertheless be prophecy.

The other branch of the dilemma is founded on the notion, that if we allow the moral freedom of human actions, prophecy is impossible, because certain foreknowledge is contrary to that freedom, and fixes and renders the event necessary.

To this the reply is, that the objection is founded on a false assumption, the Divine foreknowledge having no more influence in effectuating, or making certain any event, than human foreknowledge in the degree in which it may exist; there being no moral causality at all in knowledge. This lies in the *will*, which is the determining, acting principle in every agent; or, as Dr. Samuel Clarke has expressed it in answer to another kind of objector, "God's infallible judgment concerning *contingent* truths does no more alter the nature of the things and cause them to be *necessary*, than our *judging right* at any time concerning a contingent truth, makes it cease to be *contingent*; or than our science of a *present* truth is any *cause* of its being either *true* or *present*. Here, therefore, lies the fallacy of our author's argument. Because from God's *foreknowing* the existence of things depending upon a chain of *necessary* causes, it follows, that the existence of the things must needs be necessary; therefore from God's *judging infallibly* concerning things which depend not on necessary but *free* causes, he concludes that these things also depend not upon *free* but necessary causes. Contrary, I say, to the supposition in the argument, for it must not be first *supposed*, that things are in their *own nature necessary*; but from the power of *judging infallibly* concerning free events, it must be proved that things, otherwise supposed *free*, will thereby unavoidably become *necessary*." The whole question lies in this, Is the simple *knowledge* of an action a necessitating

cause of the action? And the answer must be in the negative, as every man's consciousness will assure him. If the causality of *influence*, either immediate, or by the arrangement of compelling events, be mixed up with this, the ground is shifted; and it is no longer a question which respects simple prescience.

This metaphysical objection having no foundation in truth, the force of the evidence arising from predictions of events, distant, and out of the power of human sagacity to anticipate, and uttered as authentications of a Divine commission, is apparent. "Such predictions, whether in the form of *declaration*, *description*, or *representation of things future*," as Mr. Boyle justly observes, "are supernatural things, and may properly be ranked among miracles." (BOYLE'S *Christian Virtuoso*.) For when, for instance, the events are distant many years or ages from the uttering of the prediction itself, depending on causes not so much as existing when the prophecy was spoken and recorded, and likewise upon various circumstances and a long arbitrary series of things, and the fluctuating uncertainties of human volitions, and especially when they depend not at all upon any external circumstances, nor upon any created being, but arise merely from the counsels and appointment of God himself,—such events can be foreknown only by that Being, one of whose attributes is omniscience, and can be foretold by him only to whom the "Father of lights" shall reveal them: so that whoever is manifestly endued with that predictive power, must, in that instance, speak and act by Divine inspiration, and what he pronounces of that kind must be received as the word of God, nothing more being necessary to assure us of this, than credible testimony that such predictions were uttered before the event, or conclusive evidence that the records which contain them are of the antiquity to which they pretend. (Vide CHAPMAN'S *Eusebius*, p. 158; CUDWORTH'S *Intellect. Syst.* p. 866; VITRINGA *in Isa.* cap. 41.)

CHAPTER X.

THE EVIDENCES NECESSARY TO AUTHENTICATE A REVELATION.—*Internal Evidence.*—*Collateral Evidence.*

THE second kind of evidence, usually considered as necessary for the attestation of a Divine revelation, is called *internal evidence*.

This kind of evidence has been already described to be that which arises from the consideration of the doctrines taught, as being consistent with the character of God, and tending to promote the virtue and happiness of man, the ends for which a revelation of the will of God was needed, and for which it must have been given, if it be considered as an act of grace and mercy.

This subject, like the two branches of the external evidence, *miracles* and *prophecy*, involves important general principles; and it may require to be the more carefully considered, as opinions have run into extremes. By some it has been doubted, whether what is called "the internal evidence," that is, the excellence of the doctrines and tendency of a revelation, ought to be ranked with the *leading* evidence of miracles and prophecy, seeing that the proof from miracles and from prophecy is decisive and absolute. For the same reason, however, prophecy might be excluded from the rank of *leading* evidence, inasmuch as miracles of themselves are, in their evidence, decisive and absolute. If, however, it were contended, that proofs from miracles, prophecy, and internal evidence, are *jointly* necessary to constitute *sufficient* proof of the truth of a revelation, there would be reason to dispute the position, understanding by "*sufficient* evidence" that degree of proof which would render it highly unreasonable, perverse, and culpable, in any one to reject the authority of the revelation. This evidence is afforded by miracles alone; for if there be any force at all in the argument from miracles, it goes to the full length of rational proof of a Divine attestation, and that both to him who personally witnesses the performance of a real miracle, and to whom it is credibly testified; and nothing more is absolutely necessary to enforce a rational conviction. But if it should please the Divine Author of a revelation to superadd the farther evidence of prophecy, and also that of the obvious truth, and beneficial tendency, of many parts of this revelation, circumstances which must necessarily be often apparent, it ought not to be disregarded in the argument in its favour, nor thought of trifling import; since though it may not be necessary to establish a rational and sufficient proof, it may have a secondary necessity, to arouse attention, to leave objectors more obviously without excuse, and also to accommodate the revelation to that variety which exists in the mental constitutions of men, one mind being excited to attention, and disposed to conviction, more forcibly by one species of proof than by another.

In strict propriety, therefore, miracles may be considered as the *primary* evidence of the truth of a revelation, and every other species of proof as *confirmatory*. Prophecy and the internal evidence are leading evidences, but neither of them stand in the foremost place. The same *abundance* of proof we perceive in nature, for the demonstration of the being and attributes of God. Proofs of the existence of a First Cause, almighty and infinitely wise, more than what is logically sufficient, surround us every where; but who can doubt, that if half the instances of infinite power and wisdom which are seen in the material universe were annihilated there would not be *sufficient* evidence to demonstrate both these, as perfections of the Maker of the universe?

On the other hand, the proof drawn from the internal evidence by

ers has been placed first in order, and the force of the evidence from
acles and prophecy is by them made to depend upon the excellence
he doctrine which they are brought forward to confirm, and which
ht first to be ascertained. Nothing, say they, is to be received as
velation from God which does not contain doctrines worthy of the
ine character, and tending to promote the good of mankind. "A
essary mark of a religion coming from God is, that the duties it en
is are all such as are agreeable to our natural notions of God, and
fective of the nature, and conducive to the happiness of man." (Dr.
CLARKE.)

Now, though it must be instantly granted, that in a revelation from
d, there will be nothing contrary to his own character; and that,
en it is made in the way of a merciful dispensation, it will contain
hing but what tends to perfect the nature, and promote the happi
s of his creatures; it is clear, that to try a professed revelation by
own notions, as to what is worthy of God and beneficial to man-
d, is to assume, that, independent of a revelation, we know what God
or we cannot say what is worthy or unworthy of him; and that we
ow, too, the character, and relations, and wants of man so perfectly
to determine what is beneficial to him; in other words, this sup-
es that we are in circumstances not greatly to need supernatural
truction.

Another objection to the internal evidence being made the primary
t of a revelation is, that it renders the external testimony nugatory,
comparatively unimportant. "Surely," observes a late ingenious
ter, "in a system which purports to be a revelation from heaven,
l to contain a history of God's dealings with men, and to develope the
ths with regard to the moral government of the universe,
owledge and belief of which will lead to happiness here and here-
er, we may expect to find (if its pretensions are well founded) an evi-
ce for its truth, which shall be independent of all external testimony."
ERSKINE *on the Internal Evidence*, &c.) If this be true, the utility
the evidence of miracles is rendered very questionable. It is either
necessary, or it is subordinate and dependent; neither of which, by
ristian divines at least, can be consistently maintained. The non-
essity of miracles cannot be asserted by them, because they believe
m to have been actually performed; and that they are subordinate,
ofs, and dependent upon the sufficiency of the internal evidence, if
ntradicted by the whole tenor of the Scriptures, which represent them
being in themselves an absolute demonstration of the mission and
trine of the prophets, at whose instance they were performed. and
er direct us to regard their doctrines as a test of the miracles. The
acles of Christ, in particular, were a demonstration, not a partial
l conditional, but a complete and absolute demonstration of his mis-

mon from God; and "it may be observed, with respect to all the miracles of the New Testament, that their divinity, considered in themselves, is always either expressly asserted, or manifestly implied: and they are accordingly urged as a decisive and absolute proof of the divinity of the doctrine and testimony of those who perform them, without ever taking into consideration the nature of the doctrine, or of the testimony to be confirmed."

Against this mode of stating the internal evidence, there lies also this logical objection, that it is arguing in a circle;—the miracles are proved by the doctrine, and then the doctrine by the miracles; an objection from which those who have adopted the notion either of the superior or the co-ordinate rank of the internal evidence, have not, with all their ingenuity and effort, fairly escaped.

Miracles must, therefore, be considered as the leading and absolute evidence of a revelation from God; and "what to me," says a sensible writer, "is, *a priori*, a strong argument of their being so, is the manifest inconsistency of the other hypotheses with the very condition of that people for whose sake God should raise up at any time his extraordinary messengers, endued with such miraculous powers. For if God ever favours mankind with such a special revelation of his will, and instructions from heaven, in a way supernatural, it is certainly in that unhappy juncture when the *principles* and *practices* of mankind are so miserably depraved and corrupted, as to want the light and assistance of revelation extremely, and are (humanly speaking) utterly incorrigible without it. Now, to say that, in these particular circumstances, men are not to depend on any real miracles, but, before they admit them as evidence of the prophet's Divine mission, they must carefully examine his doctrine, to see if it be perfectly good and true, is either to suppose these people furnished with principles and knowledge requisite for that purpose, contrary, point blank, to the real truth of their case; or else it is to assert, that they who are utterly destitute of principles and knowledge requisite for that work, must, nevertheless, undertake it without them, and judge of the truth of the prophet's doctrine and authority by their false principles of religion and morality; which, in short, is to fix them immovably where they are already, in old erroneous principles, against any new and true ones that should be offered. Especially with the bulk of mankind, full of darkness and prejudice, this must unavoidably be the consequence; and the more they wanted a reformation in principle, the less capable would they be of receiving it in this method. Thus, for instance: were a teacher sent from heaven, with signs and wonders, to a nation of idolaters, and they previously instructed to regard no miracles of his whatsoever, till they were fully satisfied of the *goodness* of his doctrine, it is easy to foresee by what rule they would prove his doctrine, and what success he would meet

with among them. Add to this, what is likewise exceedingly material, the great delays and perplexities attending this way of proceeding. For if every article of doctrine must be discussed and scanned by every person to whom it is offered, what slow advances would be made by a Divine revelation among such a people! Hundreds would probably be cut off before they came to the end of their queries, and the prophet might grow decrepit with age, before he gained twenty proselytes in a nation." (CHAPMAN'S *Eusebius*.)

It is easy to discover the causes which have led to these mistakes, as to the true *office* of the internal evidence of a Divine revelation.

In the first place, a hypothetic case has been assumed, and it has been asked, "If a doctrine, absurd and wicked, should be attested by miracles, is it to be admitted as Divine, upon their authority?" The answer is, that this is a case which cannot in the nature of things occur, and cannot, therefore, be made the basis of an argument. We have seen already, that a real miracle can be wrought by none but God, or by his commission, because the contrary supposition would exclude him from the government of the world which he has made and preserves. Whenever a *real* miracle takes place, therefore, in *attestation* of any doctrine, that doctrine cannot be either unreasonable or impious; and if it should appear so to us, after the reality of the miracle is ascertained, which is not probable ordinarily, our judgment must be erroneous. The miracle proves the doctrine, or the ground on which miracles are allowed to have any force of evidence at all, either supreme or subordinate, absolute or dependent, must be given up; for their evidence consists in this—that they are the *works of God*.

The second cause of the error has been, that the *rational* evidence of the truths contained in a revelation has been confounded with the *authenticating* evidence. When once an exhibition of the character, plans, and laws of God is made, though in their nature totally undiscoverable, by human faculties, they carry to the reason of man, *so far* as they are of a nature to be comprehended by it, the demonstration which accompanies truth of any other kind. For as the eye is formed to receive light, the rational powers of man are formed to receive conviction when the congruity of propositions is made evident. This is *rational*, but it is not *authenticating* evidence. Let us suppose that there is no external testimony of miracles or prophecy vouchsafed to attest that the teacher, through whom we receive those doctrines which appear to us so sublime, so important, so true, received them from God, with a mission to impart them to us. He himself has no means of knowing them to be from God, or of distinguishing them from some happy train of thought, into which his mind has been carried by its own force; nor if he had, have we any means of concluding that they are more than the opinions of a mind, superior in vigor and grasp to our own. They

may be true, but they are not *attested* to be Divine. We have no guarantee of their infallible truth, because our own rational powers are not infallible, nor those of the most gifted human mind. Add then the external testimony, and we have the *attestation* required. The rational evidence of the doctrine is the same in both cases; but the rational evidence, though to us it is as far, and only as far, as we can claim infallibility for our judgment, the proof of the truth of the doctrine is no proof at all that God has revealed it. In the external testimony alone that proof is found: the degree of rational evidence we have of the truth and excellency of the doctrine may be a farther commendation of it to us, but it is no part of its authority.

From this distinction, the relative importance of the external and the internal evidence of a revelation may be farther illustrated. Rational evidence of the doctrines proposed to us, when it can be had, goes to establish their *truth*, so far as we can depend upon our judgment; but the external testimony, if satisfactory, establishes their *Divine authority*, and therefore their absolute truth, and leaves us no appeal. Still farther, a revelation, dependent upon internal evidence only, could contain no doctrines, and enjoin no duties, but of which the evidence to our reason should be complete. The least objection grounded on a plausible contrary reason would weaken their force, and the absence of a clear perception of their congruity with some previous principles, admitted as true, would be the absence of all evidence of their truth whatever. On the other hand, a revelation, with rational proof of a Divine attestation, renders our instruction in many doctrines and duties possible, the rational evidence of whose truth is wanting; and as some doctrines may be true, and highly important to us, which are not capable of this kind of proof, that is, which are not so fully known as to be compared with any received propositions, and determined by them, our knowledge is, in this way, greatly enlarged: the benefits of revelation are extended; and the whole becomes *obligatory*, and therefore efficient to moral purposes, because it bears upon it the seal of an infallible authority.

The firmer ground on which a revelation, founded upon reasonable external proof of authority, rests, is also obvious. The doctrines in which we need to be instructed are, the nature of God; our own relations to that invisible Being; his will concerning us; the means of obtaining or securing his favour; the principles of his government; and a future life. These, and others of a similar kind, involve great difficulties, as the history of moral knowledge among mankind sufficiently proves; and that, not only among those who never had the benefits of the Biblical revelation on these subjects, but among those who, not considering it as an *authority*, have indulged the philosophizing spirit, and judged of these doctrines merely by their rational evidence. This, from the nature of things, appearing under different views to different minds, has

produced almost as much contrariety of opinion among them, as we find among the sages of pagan antiquity. The mere rational proof of the truth of such doctrines being therefore, from its nature, in many important respects obscure, and liable to diversity of opinion, would lay but a very precarious and shifting foundation for faith in any revelation from God suited to remove the ignorance of man on points so important as doctrine, and so essential to an efficient religion and morality.

On the other hand, the process of obtaining a rational proof of the Divine attestation of a doctrine, by miracles for instance, is of the most simple and decisive kind, and gives to unbelief the character of obvious perverseness and inconsistency. *Perverseness*, because there is a clear opposition of the will rather than of the judgment in the case; *inconsistency*, because a much lower degree of evidence is, by the very objectors, acted upon in their most important concerns in life. For who that saw the dead raised to life, in an appeal to the Lord of life, in confirmation of a doctrine professing to be taught by his authority, but must, unless wilful *perverseness* interposed, acknowledge a Divine testimony; and who that heard the fact reported on the testimony of honest men and competent observers, under circumstances in which no illusion can take place, but must be charged with *inconsistency*, should he treat the report with skepticism, when, upon the same kind and quantum of evidence, he would so credit any report as to his own affairs, as to risk the greatest interests upon it? In difficult doctrines, of a kind to give rise to a variety of opinions, the rational evidence is accompanied with doubt; in such a case as that of the miracle we have supposed, it rests on principles supported by the universal and constant experience of mankind:—1. That the raising of the dead is above human power: 2. That men, unquestionably virtuous in every other respect, are not likely to propagate a deliberate falsehood: and 3. That it contradicts all the known motives to action in human nature, that they should do so, not only without advantage, but at the hazard of reproach, persecution, and death. The evidence of such an attestation is therefore as indubitable as these principles themselves.

The fourth kind of evidence, by which a revelation from God may be confirmed, is the *collateral*; on which, at present, we need not say more than adduce some instances, merely to illustrate this kind of testimony.

The collateral evidence of a revelation from God may be its agreement in principle with every former revelation, should previous revelations have been vouchsafed—that it was obviously suited to the circumstances of the world at the time of its communication—that it is adapted to effect the great moral ends which it purposes, and has actually effected them—that if it contain a record of facts, as well as of doctrines, those historical facts agree with the credible traditions and

histories of the same times—that monuments, either natural or instituted, remain to attest the truth of its history—that adversaries have made concessions in its favour—and that, should it profess to be a universal and ultimate revelation of the will and mercy of God to man, it maintains its adaptation to the case of the human race, and its efficiency, to the present day. These and many other circumstances may be ranked under the head of collateral evidence, and some of them will, in their proper place, be applied to the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER XI.

The Use and Limitation of Reason in Religion.

HAVING pointed out the kind of evidence by which a revelation from God may be authenticated, and the circumstances under which it ought to produce conviction and enforce obedience, it appears to be a natural order of proceeding to consider the subject of the title of this chapter, inasmuch as evidence of this kind, and for this end, must be addressed to our reason, the only faculty which is capable of receiving it. But as to this office of our reason important limitations and rules must be assigned, it will be requisite to adduce and explain them.

The present argument being supposed to be with one who believes in a God, the Lord and Governor of man, and that he is a Being of infinite perfections, our observations will have the advantage of certain first principles which that belief concedes.

We have already adduced much presumptive evidence, that a revelation of the will of God is essential to his moral government, and that such a revelation has actually been made. We have also farther considered the kind and degree of evidence which is necessary to ratify it. The means by which a conviction of its truth is produced, is the point before us.

The subject to be examined is the truth of a religious and moral system, professing to be from God, though communicated by men, who plead his authority for its promulgation. If there be any force in the preceding observations, we are not, in the first instance, to examine the doctrine, in order to determine from our own opinion of its excellence, whether it be from God, (for to this, if we need a revelation, we are incompetent,) but we are to inquire into the credentials of the messengers, in quest of sufficient proof that God hath spoken to mankind by them. Should a slight consideration of the doctrine, either by its apparent excellence or the contrary, attract us strongly to this examination, it is well: but whatever prejudices, for or against the doctrine, a report, or a hasty opinion of its nature and tendency may inspire, our final judgment can only safely rest upon the proof which may be afforded of its

Divine authority. If that be satisfactory, the case is determined, whether the doctrine be pleasing or displeasing to us. If sufficient evidence be not afforded, we are at liberty to receive or reject the whole or any part of it as it may appear to us to be worthy of our regard; for it then stands on the same ground as any other merely human opinion. We are, however, to beware that this is done upon a very solemn responsibility.

The proof of the Divine authority of a system of doctrine communicated under such circumstances, is addressed to our reason, or in other words it must be *reasonable proof* that in this revelation there has been a direct and special interposition of God.

On the principles therefore already laid down, that though the rational evidence of a doctrine lies in the doctrine itself, the rational proof of the Divine *authority* of a doctrine must be external to that doctrine; and that miracles and prophecy are appropriate and satisfactory attestations of such an authority whenever they occur, the use of human reason in this inquiry is apparent. The alleged *miracles* themselves are to be examined, to determine whether they are real or pretended, allowing them to have been performed; the testimony of witnesses is to be investigated, to determine whether they actually occurred; and if this testimony has been put on record, we have also to determine whether the record was at first faithfully made, and whether it has been carefully and uncorruptedly preserved. With respect to *prophecy* we are also to examine, whether the professed prophecy be a real prediction of future events, or only an ambiguous and equivocal saying, capable of being understood in various ways; whether it relates to events which lie beyond the guess of wise and observing men; whether it was uttered so long before the events predicted, that they could not be anticipated in the usual order of things; whether it was publicly or privately uttered; and whether, if put on record, that record has been faithfully kept. To these points must our consideration be directed, and to ascertain the strength of the proof is the important province of our reason or judgment.

The second use of reason respects the interpretation of the revelation thus authenticated; and here the same rules are to be applied as in the interpretation of any other statement or record; for as our only object, after the authenticity of the revelation is established, is to discover its sense, or in other words to ascertain *what* is declared unto us therein by God, our reason or judgment is called to precisely the same office as when the meaning of any other document is in question. *The terms of the record are to be taken in their plain and commonly received sense,—figures of speech are to be interpreted with reference to the local peculiarities of the country in which the agents who wrote the record resided;—idioms are to be understood according to the genius of the language employed;—if any allegorical or mystical discourses occur, the key to them*

must be sought in the book itself, and not in our own fancies;—what is obscure must be interpreted by that which is plain;—the scope and tenor of a discourse must be regarded, and no conclusion formed on passages detached from their context, except they are complete in their sense, or evidently intended as axioms and apophthegms. These and other rules, which respect the *time* and *place* when the record was written; the *circumstances* of the writer and of those to whom he immediately addressed himself; *local customs*, &c, appear in this, and all other cases, so just and reasonable as to commend themselves to every sober man: and we rightly use our reason in the interpretation of a received revelation, when we conduct our inquiries into its meaning, by those plain common-sense rules which are adopted by all mankind when the meaning of other writings is to be ascertained.

It has been added, as a rule of interpretation, that when a revelation is sufficiently attested, and in consequence of that admitted, nothing is to be deduced from it which is *contrary to reason*. As this rule is liable to be greatly misunderstood, and has sometimes been pushed to injurious consequences, we shall consider it at some length; and point out the sense in which it may be safely admitted.

Some persons, who advocate this principle of interpretation, appear to confound the reason of man, with the reason or nature of things, and the relations which subsist among them. These however can be known fully to God alone; and to use the term reason in this sense, is the same as to use it in the sense of the reason of God,—to an equality with which human reason cannot aspire. It may be the reverse of Divine reason, or a faint radiation from it, but never can it be full and perfect as the reason of a mind of perfect knowledge. It is admitted that nothing can be revealed by God, as truth, contradictory of his knowledge, and of the nature of things themselves; but it follows not from this, that nothing should be contained in that revelation contradictory of the limited and often erring reason of man. (3)

Another distinction necessary to be made in order to the right appli-

(3) "It is the error of those who contend that all necessary truth is discoverable or demonstrable by reason, that they affirm of *human* reason *in particular*, what is only true of reason *in general*, or of reason in the abstract. To say, that whatever is true, must be either discoverable or demonstrable by reason, can only be affirmed of an *all-perfect* reason; and is therefore predicated of none but the Divine intellect. So that, unless it can be shown that *human* reason is the same, in degree, as well as in kind, with Divine reason; i. e. commensurate with it as to its powers, and equally incapable of error; the inference from reason in the abstract, to *human* reason, is manifestly inconclusive. Nothing more is necessary to show the fallacy of this mode of arguing, than to urge the indisputable truth, that God is wiser than man, and has endued man with only a *portion* of that faculty which he himself, and none other beside him, possesses in absolute perfection." (VAN MILDERT'S *Sermons at Boyle's Lecture.*)

cation of this rule is, that a doctrine which cannot be proved by our reason, is not on that account, contrary either to the nature of things, or even to reason itself. This is sometimes lost sight of, and that which has no evidence from our reason is hastily presumed to be *against* it. Now rational investigation is a process by which we inquire into the truth or falsehood of any thing by comparing it with what we intuitively, or by experience, know to be true, or with that which we have formerly demonstrated to be so. "By reason," says Cicero, "we are led from things apprehended and understood, to things not apprehended." Rational proof therefore consists in the agreement or disagreement of that which is compared with truths already supposed to be established. But there may be truths, the evidence of which can only be fully known to the Divine mind, and on which the reasoning or comparing faculty of an inferior nature cannot, from their vastness or obscurity, be employed; and such truths there must be in any revelation which treats of the nature and perfections of God; his will as to us,—and the relations we stand in to him, and to another state of being. As facts and doctrines they are as much capable of revelation as if the whole reason of things on which they are grounded were put into the revelation also; but they may be revealed as authoritative declarations, of which the process of proof is hidden, either because it transcends our faculties, or for other reasons, and we have therefore no rational evidence of their truth farther than we have rational evidence that they come from God, which is in fact a more powerful demonstration. That a revelation may contain truths of this transcendent nature must be allowed by all who have admitted its necessity, if they would be consistent with themselves; for its necessity rests, in great part, upon the weakness of human reason. If our natural faculties could have reached the truths thus exhibited to us, there had been no need of supernatural instruction; and if it has been vouchsafed, the degree depends upon the Divine will, and he may give a doctrine with its reasons, or without them; for surely the ground of our obligation to believe his word does not rest upon our perception of the rational evidence of the truths he requires us to believe. If doctrines then be given without the reasons on which they rest, that is, without any apparent agreement with what is already known; because the process of proof must, in many cases, be a comparison of that which is too vast to be fully apprehended by us with something else which, because known by us, must be comparatively little, or perhaps in some of its qualities or relations of a different nature, so that no fit comparison of things so dissimilar can be instituted; this circumstance proves the absence of rational evidence to us; but it by no means follows, that the doctrine is incapable of rational proof, though probably no reason but that of God, or of a more exalted being than man in his present state may be adequate to unfold it.

It has indeed been maintained, that though our reason may be inadequate to the discovery of such truths as the kind of revelation we have supposed to be necessary must contain, yet, when aided by this revelation, it is raised into so perfect a condition, that what appears incongruous to it ought to be concluded contrary to the revelation itself. This to a certain extent, is true. When a doctrine is clearly revealed to us, standing as it does upon an infallible authority, no contrary doctrine can be true, whether found without the record of the revelation, or deduced from it; for this is in fact no more than saying, that human opinions must be tried by Divine authority, and that revelation must be consistent with itself. The test to which in this case, however, we subject a contradictory doctrine, so long as we adhere to the revelation, is formed of principles which our reason did not furnish, but such as were communicated to us by supernatural interposition; and the judge to which we refer is not, properly speaking, reason, but revelation.

But if by this is meant, that our reason, once enlightened by the annunciation of the great truths of revelation, can discover or complete, in all cases, the process of their rational proof, that is, their conformity to the nature and truth of things, and is thus authorized to reject whatever cannot be thus harmonized with our own deductions from the leading truths thus revealed, so great a concession cannot be made to human ability. In many of the rules of morals, and the doctrines of religion too, it may be allowed, that a course of thought is opened which may be pursued to the enlargement of the rational evidence of the doctrines taught, but not as to what concerns many of the attributes of God; his purposes concerning the human race; some of his most important procedures toward us; and the future destiny of man. When once it is revealed that man is a creature, we cannot but perceive the reasonableness of our being governed by the law of our Creator; that this is founded in his right and our duty; and that, when we are concerned with a wise, and gracious, and just Governor, what is our duty must of necessity be promotive of our happiness. But if the revelation should contain any declarations as to the nature of the Creator himself, as that he is eternal and self existent and in every place; and that he knows all things; the thoughts thus suggested, the doctrines thus stated, nakedly and authoritatively, are too mysterious to be distinctly apprehended by us, and we are unable, by comparing them with any thing else, (for we know nothing with which we can compare them,) to acquire any clear views of the *manner* in which such a being exists, or *why* such perfections necessarily flow from his peculiar nature. If, therefore, the revelation itself does not state in addition to the mere facts that he is self existent, omnipresent, omniscient, &c, the manner in which the existence of such attributes harmonizes with the nature and reason of things, we cannot supply the chasm; and should we even catch some view of the

rational evidence, which is not denied, we are unable to complete it; our reason is not enlightened up to the full measure of these truths, nor on such subjects are we quite certain that some of our most rational deductions are perfectly sound, and we cannot, therefore, make use of them as standards by which to try any doctrine, beyond the degree in which they are clearly revealed, and authoritatively stated to us. Other examples might be given, but these are sufficient for illustration.

These observations being made, it will be easy to assign definite limits to the rule, "that no doctrine in an admitted revelation is to be understood in a sense contrary to reason." The only way in which such a rule can be safely received is, that nothing is to be taken as a true interpretation, when, as to the subject in question, we have sufficient knowledge to affirm, that the interpretation is contrary to the nature of things, which, in this case, it is also necessary to be assured that we have been able to ascertain. Of some things we know the nature without a revelation, inasmuch as they lie within the range of our own observation and experience, as that a human body cannot be in two places at the same time. Of other things we know the nature by revelation, and by that our knowledge is enlarged. If, therefore, from some figurative passages of a revelation, any person, as the papists, should affirm, that wine is human blood, or that a human body can be in two places at the same time, it is contrary to our reason, that is, not to mere opinion, but to the nature of something which we know so well, that we are bound to reject the interpretation as an absurdity. If, again, any were to interpret passages which speak of God as having the form of man to mean, that he has merely a local presence, our reason has been taught by revelation, that God is a spirit, and exists every where, that is, so far we have been taught the nature of things as to God, that we reject the interpretation, as contrary to what has been so clearly revealed, and resolve every anthropomorphite expression we may find in the revelation into figurative and accommodated language. In the application of this rule, when even thus limited, care is, however, to be taken, that we distinguish what is capable of being tried by it. If we compare one thing with another, in order to determine whether it agrees with, or differs from it, it is not enough that we have sufficient knowledge of that with which we compare it, and which we have made the standard of judgment. It is also necessary that the things compared should be *of the same nature*; and that the comparison should be made *in the same respects*. We take for illustration the case just given. Of two bodies we can affirm, that they cannot be in the same place at the same time; but we cannot affirm that of a body and a spirit, for we know what relation bodies have to place and to each other, but we do not know what relation spirits have to each other, or to space. This may illustrate the first rule. The second demands, that the comparison be made in

the same respect. If we affirm of two bodies, one of a round, and the other of a square figure, that their figure is the same, the comparison determines the case, and at once detects the error; but of these bodies, so different in figure, it may be affirmed without contradiction, that they are of the same specific gravity, for the difference of figure is not that in respect of which the comparison is made. We apply this to the interpretation of a revelation of God and his will. The rule which requires us to reject as a true interpretation of that revelation, whatever is contrary to reason, may be admitted in all cases where we know the real nature of things, and conduct the comparison with the cautions just given; but it would be most delusive, and would counteract the intention of the revelation itself, by unsettling its authority, if it were applied in any other way. For,

1. In all cases where the nature of things is not clearly and satisfactorily known, it cannot be affirmed that a doctrine contradicts them, and is therefore contrary to reason.

2. When that of which we would form a rational judgment is not itself distinctly apprehended, it cannot be satisfactorily compared with those things, the nature of which we adequately know, and therefore cannot be said to be contrary to reason.

Now in such a revelation as we have supposed necessary for man, there are many facts and doctrines which are not capable of being compared with any thing we adequately know, and they therefore lie wholly without the range of the rule in question. We suppose it to declare what God, the infinite First Cause, is. But it is of the nature of such a being to be, in many respects, *peculiar* to himself, and, as in those respects he cannot admit of comparison with any other, what may be false, if affirmed of ourselves, because contradictory to what we know of human nature, may be true of him, to whom the nature of things is his own nature, and his own nature alone. The same observation may be made as to many of his natural attributes; they are the attributes of a *peculiar* nature, and are therefore *peculiar* to themselves, either in kind or in degree; they admit of no comparison, each being like HIMSELF, *sui generis:* and the nature of things, as to them respectively, is their own nature. The same reasoning may, in part, be applied to the general purposes of God, in making and governing his creatures. They are not, in every respect, capable of being compared to any thing we adequately know, in order to determine their reasonableness. Creatures do not stand to each other in all the relations in which they stand to him, and no reasoning from their mutual relations can assist us in judging of the plans he has formed with respect to the *whole*, with the extent of which, indeed, we are unacquainted, or often of a part, whose relations to the whole we know not. Were we to subject what he has commanded us to do, or to leave undone, to the test of reasonableness,

we should often be at a loss how to commence the inquiry, for it may have a reason arising out of his own nature, which we either know not at all, or only in the partial and authoritative revelations he has made of himself; or out of his general plans, of which we are not judges, for the reasons just given; or its reason may lie in our own nature, which we know but partially, because we find it differently operated upon by circumstances, and cannot know in what circumstances we may at any future time be placed.

With respect to the *moral* perfections of God, as they are more capable of a complete comparison with what we find in intelligent creatures, the notion of *infinity* being applicable to them in a different sense to that in which it is applied to his natural attributes, and adequate ideas of justice and mercy and goodness being within our reach, this rule is much more applicable in all cases which would involve interpretations consistent with or opposed to these ideas; and any deduction clearly contrary to them is to be rejected, as grounded not upon the revelation but a false interpretation. This will be the more confirmed, if we find any thing in the revelation itself in the form of an appeal to our own ideas of moral subjects, as for instance of justice and equity, in justification of the Divine proceedings; for then we have the authority of the Giver of the revelation himself for attaching such ideas to his justice and equity as are implied in the same terms in the language of men. (4) A doctrine which would impugn these attributes, is not therefore to be deduced from such a revelation; but here the rule can only be applied to such cases as we fully comprehend. There may be an apparent injustice in a case, which, if we knew the whole of it, would be found to harmonize with the strictest equity; and what evidence of conformity to the moral attributes of God it now wants may be manifested in a future state, either by superior information then vouchsafed to us, or, when the subject of the proceeding is an immortal being, by the different circumstances of compensation in which he may be placed.

Upon the whole then it will appear, that this rule of interpreting a revelation is necessarily but of limited application, and chiefly respects those parts of the record in which obscure passages and figurative language may occur. In most others, a revelation, if comprehensive, will be found its own interpreter by bringing every doubtful case to be determined by its own unquestionable general principles, and explicit declarations. The USE of reason, therefore, in matters of revelation, is to investigate the evidences on which it is founded, and fairly and impartially to interpret it according to the ordinary rules of interpretation in

(4) Thus in the Scriptures we find numerous appeals of this kind: "*Judge* between me and my vineyard." "Are not my ways *equal?*" "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do *right?*" All of which passages suppose that *equity* and *justice* in God accord with the ideas attached to the same terms among men.

other cases. Its LIMIT is the authority of God. When he has explicitly laid down a doctrine, that doctrine is to be humbly received, whatever degree of rational evidence may be afforded of its truth, or withheld; and no torturing or perverting criticisms can be *innocently* resorted to, to bring a doctrine into a better accordance with our favourite views and systems, any more than to make a precept bend to the love and practice of our vicious indulgences. A larger scope than this cannot certainly be assigned to human reason in matters of revelation, when it is elevated to the office of a *judge*—a judge of the evidences on which a professed revelation rests, and a judge of its meaning after the application of the established rules of interpretation in other cases. (5) But if reason be considered as a *learner*, it may have a much wider range in those fields of intelligence which a genuine revelation from God will open to our view. All truth, even that which to us is most abstruse and mysterious, is capable of rational demonstration, though not to the reason of man, in the present state, and in some cases probably to no reason below that of the Divine nature. Truth is founded in reality, and for that reason is truth. Some truths therefore, which a revelation only could make known, will often appear to us rational, because consistent with what we already know. Meditation upon them, or experience of their reality in new circumstances in which we may be placed, may enlarge that evidence; and thus our views of the conformity of many of the doctrines revealed, with the nature and reality of things, may acquire a growing clearness and distinctness. The observations of others also may, by reading and converse, be added to our own, and often serve to carry out our minds into some new and richer vein of thought. Thus it is that reason, instead of being fettered, as some pretend, by being regulated, is enlightened by revelation, and enabled from the first principles, and by the grand landmarks which it furnishes, to pursue its inquiries into many subjects to an extent which enriches and ennobles the human intellect, and administers continual food to the strength of religious principle. This, however, is not the case with all subjects. Many, as we have already seen, are from their very nature wholly incapable of investigation. At the first step we launch into darkness, and find in religion as well as in natural philosophy, beyond certain limits, insurmountable barriers, which bid defiance to human penetration; and even where the rational evidence of a truth is markedly stated in revelation, or very partially developed, can by human powers be extended, that circumstance gives us no qualification to judge of the truth of another doctrine which is stated on the mere authority of the dispenser of the revelation, and of which there is no evidence at all to our reason. It may belong to subjects of another and a higher class;

(5) See note A at the end of this chapter, in which two common objections are answered.

and if it be found in the Record, is not to be explained away by principles which we may have drawn from other truths, though revealed, for those inferences have no higher an authority than the strength of our own fallible powers, and consequently cannot be put in competition with the declarations of an infallible teacher, ascertained by just rules of grammatical and literary interpretation.

Note A.—Page 103.

"In whatever point of view," says an able living author, "the subject be placed, the same arguments which show the incapability of man, by the light of nature, to *discover* religious truth, will serve likewise to show, that, when it is *revealed* to him, he is not warranted in *judging* of it merely by the notions which he had previously formed. For is it not a solecism to affirm, that man's natural reason is a fit standard for measuring the wisdom or truth of those things with which it is wholly unacquainted, except so far as they have been supernaturally revealed?"

"But what, then," (an objector will say,) "is the province of reason? Is it altogether useless? Or are we to be precluded from using it in this most important of all concerns, for our security against error?"

Our answer is, that we do not lessen either the utility or the dignity of human reason, by thus confining the exercise of it within those natural boundaries which the Creator himself hath assigned to it. We admit, with the Deist, that "reason is the foundation of all certitude:" and we admit, therefore, that it is fully competent to judge of the *credibility* of any thing which is proposed to it as a Divine revelation. But we deny that it has a right to dispute (because we maintain that it has not the ability to disprove) the *wisdom* or the *truth* of those things which revelation proposes to its acceptance. Reason is to judge whether those things be indeed so revealed: and this judgment it is to form, from the *evidence* to that effect. In this respect it is "the foundation of certitude," because it enables us to ascertain the *fact*, that God hath spoken to us. But this fact once established, the credibility, nay, the certainty of the things revealed, follows as of necessary consequence; since no deduction of reason can be more indubitable than this, that whatever God reveals must be true. Here, then, the authority of reason ceases. Its judgment is finally determined by the fact of the revelation itself: and it has thenceforth nothing to do, but to believe and to obey.

"But are we to believe every doctrine, however incomprehensible, however mysterious, nay, however seemingly contradictory to sense and reason?"

We answer, that revelation is supposed to treat of subjects with which man's natural reason is not conversant. It is therefore to be expected, that it should communicate some truths not to be fully comprehended by human understandings. But these we may safely receive, upon the *authority* which declares them, without danger of violating truth. *Real* and *evident* contradictions, no man can, indeed, believe, whose intellects are sound and clear. But such contradictions are no more proposed for our belief, than impossibilities are enjoined for our practice: though things difficult to understand, as well as things hard to perform, may perhaps be required of us, for the trial of our faith and resolution. *Seeming* contradictions may also occur: but these may seem to be such because they are slightly or superficially considered, or because they are judged of by principles inapplicable to the subject, and without so clear a knowledge of the nature of the

things revealed, as may lead us to form an adequate conception of them. These, however, afford no solid argument against the truth of what is proposed to our belief: since, unless we had really such an insight into the mysterious parts of revelation as might enable us to prove them to be contradictory and false, we have no good ground for rejecting them; and we only betray our own ignorance and perverseness in refusing to take God's word for the truth of things which pass man's understanding.

The simple question, indeed, to be considered, is, whether it be reasonable to believe, upon competent *authority*, things which we can neither discover ourselves, nor, when discovered, fully and clearly comprehend? Now every person of common observation must be aware, that unless he be content to receive solely upon the testimony of others a great variety of information, much of which he may be wholly unable to account for or explain, he could scarcely obtain a competency of knowledge to carry him safely through the common concerns of life. And with respect to scientific truths, the greatest masters in philosophy know full well that many things are reasonably to be believed, nay, must be believed on sure and certain grounds of conviction, though they are absolutely incomprehensible by our understandings, and even so difficult to be reconciled with other truths of equal certainty, as to carry the *appearance* of being contradictory and impossible. This will serve to show, that it is not *contrary to reason* to believe, on sufficient authority, some things which cannot be comprehended, and some things which, from the narrow and circumscribed views we are able to take of them, appear to be repugnant to our notions of truth. The ground on which we believe such things, is the strength and certainty of the *evidence* with which they are accompanied. And this is precisely the ground on which we are required to believe the truths of revealed religion. The *evidence* that *they come from God*, is, to reason itself, as incontrovertible a proof that they are true, as in matters of human science would be the evidence of sense, or of mathematical demonstration.

CHAPTER XII

Antiquity of the Scriptures.

From the preparatory course of argument and observation which has been hitherto pursued, we proceed to the investigation of the question, whether there are sufficient reasons to conclude that such a revelation of truth, as we have seen to be so necessary for the instruction and moral correction of mankind, is to be found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; a question of the utmost importance, inasmuch as, if not found there, there are the most cogent reasons for concluding, that a revelation was never vouchsafed to man, or that it is irretrievably lost.

No person living in an enlightened country will for a moment contend, that the Koran of Mohammed, or any of the reputed sacred writings of the Chinese, Hindoos, or Budhists, can be put into competition with the Bible; so that it is universally acknowledged among us, that there is but one book in the world which has claims to Divine

authority so presumptively substantial as to be worthy of serious examination,—and therefore if the advantage of supernatural and infallible instruction has been afforded to man, it may be concluded to be found in that alone. This consideration indicates the proper temper of mind with which such an inquiry ought to be approached.

Instead of wishing to discover that the claims of the Scriptures to Divine authority are unfounded, (the case it is to be feared with too many,) every humble and sincere man, who, conscious of his own mental infirmity, and recollecting the perplexities in which the wisest of men have been involved on religious and moral subjects, will wish to find at length an infallible guide, and will examine the evidences of the Bible with an anxious desire that he may find sufficient reason to acknowledge their Divine authority; and he will feel, that, should he be disappointed, he has met with a painful misfortune, and not a matter for triumph. If this temper of mind, which is perfectly consistent with full, and even severe examination of the claims of Scripture, does not exist, the person destitute of it is neither a *sincere* nor an *earnest* inquirer after truth.

We may go farther and say, though we have no wish to prejudge the argument, that if the person examining the Holy Scriptures in order to ascertain the truth of their pretensions to Divine authority, has had the means of only a general acquaintance with their contents, he ought, if a lover of *virtue* as well as *truth*, to be predisposed in their favour; and that, if he is not, the moral state of his heart is liable to great suspicion. For that the theological system of the Scriptures is in favour of the highest virtues, cannot be denied. It both prescribes them, and affords the strongest possible motives to their cultivation. Love to God, and to all mankind; meekness, courtesy, charity; the government of the appetites and affections within the rules of temperance; the renunciation of evil imaginations, and sins of the heart; exact justice in all our dealings;—these, and indeed every other virtue, civil, social, domestic, and personal, are clearly taught, and solemnly commanded: and it might be confidently put to every candid person, however skeptical, whether the universal observance of the morality of the Scriptures, by all ranks and nations, would not produce the most beneficial changes in society, and secure universal peace, friendship, and happiness. This he would not deny; this has been acknowledged by some infidel writers themselves, and if so,—if after all the bewildering speculations of the wisest men on religious and moral subjects, and which, as we have seen, led to nothing definite and influential, a book is presented to us which shows what virtue is, and the means of attaining it; which enforces it by sufficient sanctions, and points every individual and every community to a certain remedy for all their vices, disorders, and miseries;—we must renounce all title to be considered lovers of virtue and lovers of our species, if we

do not feel ourselves interested in the establishment of its claims to Divine authority; and because we love virtue, we shall wish that the proof of this important point may be found satisfactory. This surely is the temper of mind we ought to bring to such an inquiry; and the rejection of the Scriptures by those who are not under its influence, is rather a presumption in their favour than a consideration which throws upon them the least discredit.

In addition to the proofs which have been given of the *necessity* of a revelation, both from the reason of things, and the actual circumstances of the world, it has been established, that miracles actually performed, and prophecies really uttered and clearly accomplished, are satisfactory proofs of the authority of a communication of the will of God through the agency of men. We have however stated, that in cases where we are not witnesses of the miracles, and auditors of the predictions, but obtain information respecting them from some record, we must, before we can admit the force of the argument drawn from them, be assured, that the record was early and faithfully made, and has been uncorruptly kept, with respect to the miracles; and, with respect to the prophecies, that they were also uttered and recorded previously to those events occurring which are alleged to be accomplishments of them. These are points necessary to be ascertained before it is worth the trouble to inquire, whether the alleged miracles have any claim to be considered as miraculous in a proper sense, and the predictions as revelations from an omniscient, and, consequently, a Divine Being.

The first step in this inquiry is, to ascertain the existence, age, and actions, of the leading persons mentioned in Scripture as the instruments by whom it is professed the revelations they contain were made known.

With respect to these PERSONS it is not necessary that our attention should be directed to more than two, MOSES and CHRIST,—one the reputed agent of the Mosaic, the other the author of the Christian revelation; because the evidence which establishes their existence and actions, and the period of both, will also establish all that is stated in the same records as to the subordinate and succeeding agents.

The Biblical record states, that Moses was the leader and legislator of the nation of the Jews near sixteen hundred years before the Christian era, according to the common chronology. This is grounded upon the tradition and national history of the Jews; and it is certain, that so far from there being any reason to doubt the fact, much less to suppose, with an extravagant fancy of some modern infidels, that Moses was a mythological personage, the very same principles of historical evidence which assure us of the truth of any unquestioned fact of profane history, assure us of the truth of this. It cannot be doubted but that the Jews existed very anciently as a nation. It is equally certain, that it has been an uninterrupted and universally received tradition among them

in all ages, that Moses led them out of Egypt, and first gave them their system of laws and religion. The history of that event they have in writing, and also the laws attributed to him. There is nothing in the leading events of their history contradicted by remaining authentic historical records of those nations with whom they were geographically and politically related, to support any suspicion of its accuracy; and as their institutions must have been established and enjoined by some political authority, and bear the marks of a systematic arrangement, established at once, and not growing up under the operation of circumstances at distant periods, to one superior and commanding mind they are most reasonably to be attributed. The Jews refer them to Moses, and if this be denied, no proof can be offered in favour of any other person being entitled to that honour. The history is therefore uncontradicted by any opposing evidence, and can only be denied on some principle of skepticism which would equally shake the foundations of all history whatever.

The same observations may be made as to the existence of the Founder of the Christian religion. In the records of the New Testament he is called JESUS CHRIST, because he professed to be the Messias predicted in the Jewish Scriptures, and was acknowledged as such by his followers; and his birth is fixed upward of eighteen centuries ago. This also is at least uncontradicted testimony. The Christian religion exists, and must have had an author. Like the institutions of Moses, it bears the evidence of being the work of one mind; and, as a theological system, presents no indications of a gradual and successive elaboration. There was a time when there was no such religion as that of Christianity, and when pagan idolatry and Judaism universally prevailed; it follows, that there once flourished a teacher to whom it owed its origin, and all tradition and history unite in their testimony, that that lawgiver was Jesus Christ. No other person has ever been adduced, living at a later period, as the founder of this form of religion.

To the existence, and the respective antiquity ascribed in the Scriptures to the founders of the Jewish and Christian religion, many ancient writers give ample testimony; who being themselves neither of the Jewish nor Christian religion, cannot be suspected of having any design to furnish evidence of the truth of either. MANETHO, CHEREMON, APOLLONIUS, and LYSIMACHUS, beside some other ancient Egyptians, whose histories are now lost, are quoted by Josephus, as extant in his days; and passages are collected from them, in which they agree that Moses was the leader of the Jews when they departed from Egypt, and the founder of their laws. STRABO, who flourished in the century before Christ, (*Geog.* l. 16,) gives an account of the law of Moses as forbidding images, and limiting Divine worship to one invisible and universal Being. JUSTIN, a Roman historian, in his 36th book devotes

a chapter to an account of the origin of the Jews; represents them as sprung from ten sons of Israel, and speaks of Moses as the commander of the Jews who went out of Egypt, of the institution of the Sabbath, and the priesthood of Aaron. PLINY speaks of Moses as giving rise to a sect of Magicians, probably with reference to his contest with the magicians of Egypt. TACITUS says, "Moses gave a new form of worship to the Jews, and a system of religious ceremonies, the reverse of every thing known to any other age or country." JUVENAL, in his 14th Satire, mentions Moses as the author of a volume, which was preserved with great care among the Jews, by which the worship of images and eating swine's flesh were forbidden; and circumcision and the observation of the Sabbath strictly enjoined. LONGINUS cites Moses as the lawgiver of the Jews, and praises the sublimity of his style in the account he gives of the creation. The ORPHIC verses which are very ancient, inculcate the worship of one God, as recommended by that law "which was given by him who was drawn out of the water, and received two tables of stone from the hand of God."—(*Eus. Præp. Ev.* l. 13, c. xii.) DIODORUS SICULUS, in his first book when he treats of those who consider the gods to be the authors of their laws, adds, "Among the Jews was Moses, who called God by the name of Ιαω, *Iao*," meaning Jehovah. JUSTIN MARTYR expressly says, that most of the historians, poets, lawgivers, and philosophers of the Greeks, mention Moses as the leader and prince of the Jewish nation. From all these testimonies, and many more were it necessary might be adduced, it is clear that it was as commonly received among ancient nations, as among the Jews themselves, that Moses was the founder and lawgiver of the Jewish state.

As to CHRIST, it is only necessary to give the testimony of two historians, whose antiquity no one ever thought of disputing. SUETONIUS mentions him by name, and says, that Claudius expelled from Rome those who adhered to his cause. (6) TACITUS records the progress which the Christian religion had made; the violent death its founder had suffered; that he flourished under the reign of Tiberius; that Pilate was then procurator of Judea; and that the original author of this profession was Christ. (7) Thus, not only the real existence of the founder of Christianity, but the period in which he lived is exactly ascertained from writings, the genuineness of which has never been doubted

The ANTIQUITY OF THE BOOKS which contain the history, the doctrines, and the laws, of the Jewish and the Christian lawgivers, is next to be considered, and the evidence is not less satisfactory. The im-

(6) Judæos impulsore Christo assidue tumultuantes Româ expulit. (SUET. Edit Var. p. 544.)

(7) Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. (*Annal.* l. 5.)

portance of this fact in the argument is obvious. If the writings in question were made at, or very near, the time in which the miraculous acts recorded in them were performed, then the evidence of those events having occurred is rendered the stronger, for they were written at the time when many were still living who might have contradicted the narration if false; and the improbability is also greater, that, in the very age and place when and where those events are said to have been performed, any writer would have dared to run the hazard of prompt, certain, and disgraceful detection. It is equally important in the evidence of prophecy; for if the predictions were recorded long before the events which accomplished them took place, then the only question which remains is, whether the accomplishment is satisfactory; for then the evidence becomes irresistible.

With respect to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the language in which they are written is a strong proof of their antiquity. The Hebrew ceased to be spoken as a living language soon after the Babylonish captivity, and the learned agree that there was no grammar made for the Hebrew till many ages after. The difficulty of a forgery, at any period after the time of that captivity, is therefore apparent. Of these books too there was a Greek translation made about two hundred and eighty-seven years before the Christian era, and laid up in the Alexandrian library.

Josephus gives a catalogue of the sacred books among the Jews, in which he expressly mentions the five books of Moses, thirteen of the Prophets, four of Hymns and Moral Precepts; and if, as many critics maintain, Ruth was added to Judges, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah to his Prophecies, the number agrees with those of the Old Testament as it is received at the present day.

The Samaritans, who separated from the Jews many hundred years before the birth of Christ, have in their language a Pentateuch, in the main exactly agreeing with the Hebrew; and the pagan writers before cited, with many others, speak of Moses not only as a lawgiver and a prince, but as the author of books esteemed sacred by the Jews. (8)

If the writings of Moses then are not genuine, the forgery must have taken place at a very early period; but a few considerations will show, that at *any* time this was impossible.

These books could never have been surreptitiously put forth in the name of Moses, as the argument of Leslie most fully proves:—"It is impossible that those books should have been received as his, if not written by him, because they speak of themselves as delivered by Moses, and kept in the ark from his time: 'And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until

(8) See note A at the end of this chapter, for a larger proof of the above particulars

they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take the book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee,' Deut. xxxi, 24–26. A copy of this book was also to be left with the king: 'And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites; and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life,' &c, Deut. xviii, 18. This book of the law thus speaks of itself, not only as a history or relation of what things were done, but as the standing and municipal law and statutes of the nation of the Jews, binding the king as well as the people. Now in whatever age after Moses this book may be supposed to have been forged, it was impossible that it could be received as truth, because it was not then to be found (as it professed to be) either in the ark or with the king, or any where else; for when first invented, every body must know that they had never heard of it before.

"Could any man, now at this day, invent a book of statutes or acts of parliament for England, and make it pass upon the nation as the only book of statutes that ever they had known? As impossible was it for the books of Moses (if they were invented in any age after Moses) to have been received for what they declare themselves to be, viz. the statutes and municipal law of the nation of the Jews: and to have persuaded the Jews, that they had owned and acknowledged these books, all along from the days of Moses, to that day in which they were first invented; that is, that they had owned them before they had ever so much as heard of them. Nay, more, the whole nation must, in an instant, forget their former laws and government, if they could receive these books as being their former laws. And they could not otherwise receive them, because they vouched themselves so to be. Let me ask the Deists but one short question: Was there ever a book of sham laws, which were not the laws of the nation, palmed upon any people, since the world began? If not, with what face can they say this of the book of laws of the Jews? Why will they say that of them which they confess impossible in any nation, or among any people?

"But they must be yet more unreasonable. For the books of Moses have a farther demonstration of their truth than even other law books have; for they not only contain the laws, but give a historical account of their institution, and the practice of them from that time: as of the passover, in memory of the death of the first born in Egypt, Num. viii, 17, 18: and that the same day, all the first born of Israel, both of man and beast, were, by a perpetual law, dedicated to God: and the Levites taken for all the first born of the children of Israel. That Aaron's rod, which budded, was kept in the ark, in memory of the rebellion, and

wonderful destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and for the confirmation of the priesthood to the tribe of Levi. As likewise the pot of manna, in memory of their having been fed with it forty years in the wilderness. That the brazen serpent was kept (which remained to the days of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii, 4,) in memory of that wonderful deliverance, by only looking upon it, from the biting of the fiery serpents, Numbers xxi. 9. The feast of pentecost, in memory of the dreadful appearance of God upon Mount Horeb, &c.

"And beside these remembrances of particular actions and occurrences, there were other solemn institutions in memory of their deliverance out of Egypt, in the general, which included all the particulars. As of the Sabbath, Deut. v, 15. Their daily sacrifices and yearly expiation; their new moons, and several feasts and fasts. So that there were yearly, monthly, weekly, daily remembrances and recognitions of these things.

"And not only so, but the books of the same Moses tell us, that a particular tribe (of Levi) was appointed and consecrated by God as his priests; by whose hands, and none other, the sacrifices of the people were to be offered, and these solemn institutions to be celebrated. That it was death for any other to approach the altar. That their high priest wore a glorious mitre, and magnificent robes of God's own contrivance, with the miraculous Urim and Thummim in his breastplate, whence the Divine responses were given, Num. xxvii, 21. That at his word the king and all the people were to go out, and to come in. That these Levites were likewise the chief judges even in all civil causes, and that it was death to resist their sentence, Deut. xvii, 8–13; 1 Chron. xxiii, 4. Now whenever it can be supposed that these books of Moses were forged in some ages after Moses, it is impossible they could have been received as true, unless the forgers could have made the whole nation believe, that they had received these books from their fathers, had been instructed in them when they were children, and had taught them to their children; moreover, that they had all been circumcised, and did circumcise their children, in pursuance to what was commanded in these books: that they had observed the yearly passover, the weekly Sabbath, the new moons, and all these several feasts, fasts, and ceremonies, commanded in these books: that they had never eaten any swine's flesh, or other meats prohibited in these books: that they had a magnificent tabernacle, with a visible priesthood to administer in it, which was confined to the tribe of Levi; over whom was placed a glorious high priest, clothed with great and mighty prerogatives, whose death only could deliver those that were fled to the cities of refuge, Num. xxxv, 25, 28. And that these priests were their ordinary judges, even in civil matters: I say, was it possible to have persuaded a whole nation of men, that they had known and practised all these things if they had not done it? or, secondly, to

have received a book for truth, which said they had practised them, and appealed to that practice?

'But now let us descend to the utmost degree of supposition, viz. that these things were practised, before these books of Moses were forged; and that those books did only impose upon the nation, in making them believe that they had kept these observances in memory of such and such things as were inserted in those books.

"Well then, let us proceed upon this supposition, (however groundless,) and now, will not the same impossibilities occur, as in the former case? For, first, this must suppose that the Jews kept all these observances in memory of nothing, or without knowing any thing of their original, or the reason why they kept them. Whereas these very observances did express the ground and reason of their being kept, as the passover, in memory of God's passing over the children of the Israelites, in that night wherein he slew all the first born of Egypt, and so of the rest.

"But, secondly, let us suppose, contrary both to reason and matter of fact, that the Jews did not know any reason at all why they kept these observances; yet was it possible to put it upon them—that they had kept these observances in memory of what they had never heard of before that day, whensoever you will suppose that these books of Moses were first forged? For example, suppose I should now forge some romantic story of strange things done a thousand years ago; and, in confirmation of this, should endeavour to persuade the Christian world that they had all along, from that day to this, kept the first day of the week in memory of such a hero, an Apollonius, a Barcosbas, or a Mohammed; and had all been baptized in his name; and swore by his name, and upon that very book (which I had then forged, and which they never saw before,) in their public judicatures; that this book was their Gospel and law, which they had ever since that time, these thousand years past, universally received and owned, and none other. I would ask any Deist, whether he thinks it possible that such a cheat could pass, or such a legend be received as the Gospel of Christians, and that they could be made believe that they never had any other Gospel?

"Let me give one very familiar example more in this case. There is the Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain, every body knows it; and yet none knows the reason why those great stones were set there, or by whom, or in memory of what.

"Now, suppose I should write a book to-morrow, and tell them that these stones were set up by Hercules, Polyphemus, or Garagantua, in memory of such and such of their actions. And for a farther confirmation of this, should say in this book, that it was written at the time when such actions were done, and by the very actors themselves, or eye witnesses. And that this book had been received as truth, and

quoted by authors of the greatest reputation in all ages since. Moreover that this book was well known in England, and enjoined by act of parliament to be taught our children, and that we did teach it to our children, and had been taught it ourselves when we were children. I ask any Deist, whether he thinks this could pass upon England? and whether, if I, or any other should insist upon it, we should not, instead of being believed, be sent to Bedlam?

"Now, let us compare this with the Stonehenge, as I may call it, of twelve great stones set up at Gilgal, which is told in the fourth chapter of Joshua. There it is said, verse 6, that the reason why they were set up was, that when their children in after ages, should ask the meaning of it, it should be told them.

"And the thing in memory of which they were set up, was such as could not possibly be imposed upon that nation, at that time when it was said to be done; it was as wonderful and miraculous as their passage through the Red Sea.

"For notice was given to the Israelites the day before, of this great miracle to be done, Josh. iii, 5. It was done at noon-day before the whole nation. And when the waters of Jordan were divided, it was not at any low ebb, but at the time when that river overflowed all his banks, verse 15. And it was done, not by winds, or in length of time which winds must take to do it; but all on the sudden, as soon as the 'feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, then the waters which came down from above, stood and rose up upon a heap, very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the Salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over, right against Jericho. The priests stood in the midst of Jordan till all the armies of Israel had passed over. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lift up upon the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned into their place, and flowed over all his banks as they did before. And the people came out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho, and those twelve stones which they took out of Jordan did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then shall ye let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over; as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over, that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever.' Chap. iv, from verse 18.

"Now, to form our argument, let us suppose that there never was any such thing as that passage over Jordan; that these stones at Gilgal were set up upon some other occasion, in some after age; and then, that some designing man invented this book of Joshua, and said that it was written by Joshua at that time, and gave this stonage at Gilgal, for a testimony of the truth of it; would not every body say to him, We know the stonage at Gilgal, but we never heard before of this reason for it, nor of this book of Joshua. Where has it been all this while? And where, and how came you, after so many ages, to find it? Beside, this book tells us, that this passage over Jordan was ordained to be taught our children, from age to age; and, therefore, that they were always to be instructed in the meaning of that stonage at Gilgal, as a memorial of it. But we were never taught it, when we were children; nor did ever teach our children any such thing. And it is not likely that it could have been forgotten, while so remarkable a stonage did continue, which was set up for that and no other end!

"And if, for the reasons before given, no such imposition could be put upon us as to the stonage in Salisbury Plain; how much less could it be to the stonage at Gilgal?

"And if, where we know not the reason of a bare naked monument, such a sham reason cannot be imposed, how much more is it impossible to impose upon us in actions and observances, which we celebrate in memory of particular passages? How impossible to make us forget those passages which we daily commemorate; and persuade us that we had always kept such institutions in memory of what we never heard of before; that is, that we knew it before we knew it!"

This able reasoning has never been refuted, nor can be; and if the books of the law must have been written by Moses, it is as easy to prove that Moses himself could not in the nature of the thing have deceived the people by an imposture, and a pretence of miraculous attestations, in order, like some later lawgivers among the heathens, to bring the people more willingly to submit to his institutions. The very instances of miracle he gives, rendered this impossible. "Suppose," says the same writer, "any man should pretend, that yesterday he divided the Thames, in presence of all the people of London, and carried the whole city, men, women, and children, over to Southwark, on dry land, the waters standing like walls on both sides: I say, it is morally impossible that he could persuade the people of London, that this was true, when every man, woman, and child, could contradict him, and say, that this was a notorious falsehood, for that they had not seen the Thames so divided, nor had gone over on dry land.

"As to Moses, I suppose it will be allowed me, that he could not have persuaded 600,000 men, that he had brought them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea; fed them forty years, without bread, by miraculous manna,

and the other matters of fact, recorded in his books, if they had not been true. Because every man's senses that was then alive must have contradicted it. And therefore he must have imposed upon all their senses, if he could have made them believe it, when it was false and no such things done.

"From the same reason, it was equally impossible for him to have made them receive his five books as truth, and not to have rejected them as a manifest imposture, which told of all these things as done before their eyes, if they had not been so done. See how positively he speaks to them, Deut. xi, 2, to verse 8: 'And know you this day, for I speak not with your children, which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land, and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you; and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day: And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliah, the son of Reuben, how the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did,' &c.

"From hence we must suppose it impossible that these books of Moses (if an imposture) could have been invented and put upon the people who were then alive when all these things were said to be done."

By these arguments (9) the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Moses are established; and as to those of the prophets, which, with some predictions in the writings of Moses, comprise the prophetic branch of the evidence of the Divine authority of the revelations they contain, it can be proved both from Jewish tradition, the list of Josephus, the Greek translation, and from their being quoted by ancient writers, that they existed many ages before several of those events occurred, to which we shall refer in the proper place as eminent and unequivocal instances of prophetic accomplishment. This part of the argument will

(9) The reasoning of Leslie, so incontrovertible as to the four last books of the Pentateuch, does not so fully apply to the book of Genesis. Few, however, will dispute the genuineness of this, if that of the other books of Moses be conceded. That the book of Genesis must have been written prior to the other books of the Pentateuch is, however, certain, for Exodus constantly refers to events nowhere recorded but in the book of Genesis; and without the book of Genesis, the abrupt commencement of Exodus would have been as unintelligible to the Jews as it would be to us. The Pentateuch must therefore be considered as one book, under five divisions, having a mutual coherence and dependence.

nerefore be also sufficiently established: the prophecy will be shown to have been delivered long before the event, and the event will be proved to be a fulfilment of the prophecy. A more minute examination of the date of the prophetic books rather belongs to those who write expressly on the canon of Scripture.

The same author from whom we have already largely quoted, (*Leslie.*) applies his celebrated four rules for determining the truth of matters of fact in general, with equal force to the facts of the Gospel history as to those contained in the Mosaic writings. The rules are, "1. That the matter of fact be such, as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it.—2. That it be done publicly in the face of the world.—3. That not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed.—4. That such monuments and such actions and observances be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done."

We have seen the manner in which these rules are applied to the books of Moses. The author thus applies them to the Gospel:—

"I come now to show, that as in the matters of fact of Moses, so likewise all these four marks do meet in the matters of fact which are recorded in the Gospel of our blessed Saviour: And my work herein will be the shorter, because all that is said before of Moses and his books, is every way as applicable to Christ and his Gospel. His works and his miracles are there said to be done publicly in the face of the world, as he argued to his accusers, 'I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing,' John xviii, 20. It is told, Acts ii, 41, that three thousand at one time, and Acts iv, 4, that above five thousand at another time, were converted upon conviction of what themselves had seen, what had been done publicly before their eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them. Therefore here were the two first rules before mentioned.

"Then for the two second: Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted as perpetual memorials of these things; and they were not instituted in after ages, but at the very time when these things were said to be done; and have been observed without interruption, in all ages through the whole Christian world, down all the way from that time to this. And Christ himself did ordain apostles and other ministers of his Gospel, to preach and administer the sacraments; and to govern his Church: and that always, even unto the end of the world, Matt. xviii, 20. Accordingly, they have continued by regular succession to this day: and no doubt ever shall while the earth shall last. So that the Christian clergy are as notorious a matter of fact, as the tribe of Levi among the Jews. And the Gospel is as much a law to the Christians, as the book of Moses to the Jews: and it being part of the matters of fact related in the Gospel, that such an order of men were appointed

by Christ, and to continue to the end of the world consequently, if the Gospel was a fiction, and invented (as it must be) in some ages after Christ; then, at that time when it was first invented, there could be no such order of clergy, as derived themselves from the institution of Christ; which must give the lie to the Gospel, and demonstrate the whole to be false. And the matters of fact of Christ being pressed to be true, no otherwise than as there was at that time, (whenever the Deists will suppose the Gospel to be forged,) not only public sacraments of Christ's institution, but an order of clergy, likewise, of his appointment to administer them: and it being impossible there could be any such things before they were invented, it is as impossible that they should be received when invented. And therefore, by what was said above, it was as impossible to have imposed upon mankind in this matter, by inventing of it in after ages, as at the time when those things were said to be done.

"The matters of fact of Mohammed, or what is fabled of the heathen deities, do all want some of the aforesaid four rules, whereby the certainty of matters of fact is demonstrated. First, for Mohammed, he pretended to no miracles, as he tells us in his Alcoran, c. 6, &c; and those which are commonly told of him pass among the Mohammedans themselves but as legendary fables; and, as such, are rejected by the wise and learned among them: as the legends of their saints are in the Church of Rome. See Dr. Prideaux's Life of Mohammed, page 34.

"But, in the next place, those which are told of him do all want the two first rules before mentioned. For his pretended converse with the moon; his Mersa, or night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem. and thence to heaven, &c, were not performed before any body. We have only his own word for them. And they are as groundless as the delusions of the Fox or Muggleton among ourselves. The same is to be said (in the second place) of the fables of the heathen gods, of Mercury's stealing sheep, Jupiter's turning himself into a bull, and the like; beside the folly and unworthiness of such senseless pretended miracles.

"It is true the heathen deities had their priests: they had likewise feasts, games, and other public institutions in memory of them. But all these want the fourth mark, viz. that such priesthood and institutions should commence from the time that such things as they commemorate were said to be done; otherwise they cannot secure after ages from the imposture, by detecting it, at the time when first invented, as hath been argued before. But the Bacchanalia, and other heathen feasts were instituted many ages after what was reported of these gods was said to be done, and therefore can be no proof. And the priests of Bacchus, Apollo, &c, were not ordained by these supposed gods; but were appointed by others, in after ages, only in honour to them. And

therefore these orders of priests are no evidence to the matters of fact which are reported of their gods.

"Now to apply what has been said. You may challenge all the Deists in the world to show any action that is fabulous, which has all the four rules or marks before mentioned. No, it is impossible. And (to resume a little what is spoken to before) the histories of Exodus and the Gospel never could have been received, if they had not been true; because the institution of the priesthood of Levi, and of Christ; of the Sabbath, the Passover, of Circumcision, of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, &c, are there related, as descending all the way down from those times, without interruption. And it is full as impossible to persuade men that they had been circumcised or baptized, had circumcised or baptized their children, celebrated passovers, sabbaths, sacraments, &c, under the government and administration of a certain order of priests, if they had done none of these things, as to make them believe that they had gone through seas upon dry land, seen the dead raised, &c. And without believing these, it was impossible that either the Law or the Gospel could have been received.

"And the truth of the matters of fact of Exodus and the Gospel, being no otherwise pressed upon men, than as they have practised such public institutions, it is appealing to the senses of mankind for the truth of them; and makes it impossible for any to have invented such stories in after ages, without a palpable detection of the cheat when first invented; as impossible as to have imposed upon the senses of mankind. at the time when such public matters of fact were said to be done." (1)

But other evidence of the truth of the Gospel history, beside that which arises from this convincing reasoning, may be adduced.

In the first place, the narrative of the evangelists, as to the *actions*, &c, of Christ, cannot be rejected without renouncing all faith in history, any more than to deny that he really existed.

"We have the same reason to believe that the evangelists have given us a true history of the life and transactions of JESUS, as we have that Xenophon and Plato have given us a faithful and just narrative of the character and doctrines of the excellent SOCRATES. The sacred writers were, in every respect, qualified for giving a real circumstantial detail of the life and religion of the person whose memoirs they have transmitted down to us. They were the select companions and familiar friends of the hero of their story. They had free and liberal access to him at all times. They attended his *public* discourses, and in his moments of *retirement* he unbosomed his whole soul to them without disguise. They were *daily* witnesses of his sincerity and goodness of

(1) See Note B at the end of this chapter, in which the same kind of argument is illustrated by the miraculous gift of tongues.

heart. They were spectators of the amazing operations he performed and of the silent unostentatious manner in which he performed them. In private he explained to them the doctrines of his religion in the most familiar, endearing converse, and gradually initiated them into the principles of his Gospel, as their *Jewish* prejudices admitted. *Some* of these writers were his inseparable *attendants*, from the commencement of his public ministry to his death, and could give the world as true and faithful a narrative of his character and instructions, as Xenophon was enabled to publish of the life and philosophy of Socrates. If PLATO hath been in every respect qualified to compose an historical account of the behaviour of his master in his imprisonment; of the philosophic discourses he addressed to his friends before he drank the poisonous bowl; as he constantly attended him in those unhappy scenes; was present at those mournful interviews; (2)—in like manner was the Apostle JOHN fitted for compiling a just and genuine narration of the last consolatory discourses our Lord delivered to his dejected followers, a little before his last sufferings, and of the unhappy exit he made, with its attendant circumstances, of which he was a personal spectator. The foundation of these things cannot be invalidated, without invalidating the *faith of history*. *No* writers have enjoyed more propitious, *few* have ever enjoyed *such* favourable opportunities for publishing *just* accounts of persons and things as the *evangelists*. Most of the *Greek* and *Roman* historians lived *long after* the persons they immortalize, and the events they record. The sacred writers commemorate actions they *saw*, discourses they *heard*, persecutions they *supported*; describe characters with which they were familiarly *conversant*, and transactions and scenes in which *they themselves* were intimately interested. The pages of their history are impressed with every feature of credibility: an artless simplicity characterizes all their writings. Nothing can be farther from vain ostentation and popular applause. No studied arts to dress up *a cunningly devised fable*. No vain declamation *after* any miracle of our SAVIOUR they relate. They record these astonishing operations with the same dispassionate coolness, as if they had been common transactions, without that ostentatious rhodomontade which *enthusiasts* and *impostors* universally employ. They give us a plain, unadorned narration of these amazing feats of supernatural power—saying nothing *previously* to raise our expectation, or *after* their performance breaking forth into any exclamation—but leaving the reader to draw the conclusion. The writers of these books are distinguished above all the authors who ever wrote accounts of persons and things,

(2) Quid dicam de *Socrate*, (says Cicero,) cujus morti illachrymari soleo, *Platonem* legens.—*De Natura Deorum*, p. 329, Edit. *Davies*, 1723.—See also PLATO'S *Phædo*, passim, particularly pages 311, 312.—Edit *Forster*, Oxon 1741

for their sincerity and integrity. *Enthusiasts* and *impostors* never pro claim to the world the *weakness* of their understanding, and the *defects* of their character. The *evangelists* honestly acquaint the reader with the *lowness* of their station, the *indigence* of their circumstances, the *inveteracy* of their national prejudices, their *dullness* of apprehension, their *weakness* of faith, their *ambitious* views, and the warm *contentions* they agitated among themselves. They even tell us how they basely *deserted* their Master, by a shameful precipitate flight, when he was seized by his enemies; and that *after* his crucifixion, they had all again returned to their former secular employments—for ever resigning all the hopes they had once fondly cherished, and abandoning the cause in which they had so long been engaged, notwithstanding all the proofs which had been exhibited, and the conviction they had *before* entertained, that JESUS was the *Messiah*, and that his religion was from God. A faithful picture this, held up to the reader, for him to contemplate the true features of the writer's mind. Such men as these were as far from being deceived themselves, as they were incapable of imposing a falsehood upon others. The sacred regard they had for *truth* appears in every thing they relate. They mention, with many affecting circumstances, the obstinate, unreasonable incredulity of *one* of their associates—not convinced but by *ocular* and *sensible* demonstration. They might have *concealed* from the world their own faults and follies—or if they had chosen to mention them, might have alleged plausible reasons to *soften* and *extenuate* them. But they related, without disguise, events and facts just as they happened, and left them to speak their own language. So that to reject a history thus circumstanced, and impeach the veracity of writers furnished with these qualifications for giving the justest accounts of personal characters and transactions, which they enjoyed the best opportunity for accurately observing and knowing, is an affront offered to the reason and understanding of mankind; a solecism against the laws of truth and history, which would, with equal reason, lead men to disbelieve every thing related in HERODOTUS, THUCYDIDES, DIODORUS SICULUS, LIVY, and TACITUS; to confound all history with fable and fiction; truth with falsehood, and veracity with imposture; and not to credit any thing how well soever attested;—that there were such kings as the *Stuarts*, or such places as *Paris* and *Rome*, because we are not indulged with *ocular* conviction of them. The truth of the Gospel history [independent of the question of the inspiration of the sacred writers] rests upon the same basis with the truth of other ancient books, and its *pretensions* are to be impartially examined by the same rules by which we judge of the credibility of all other historical monuments. And if we compare the merit of the sacred writers, as *historians*, with that of other writers, we shall be convinced, that they are inferior to none who ever wrote, either with regard to *knowledge of*

persons, acquaintance with facts, candour of mind, and *reverence for truth.*" (HARWOOD'S *Introduction to the New Testament.*)

A second source of evidence to the truth of the history of the evangelists, may be brought from the testimonies of adversaries and heathens to the leading facts which they record.

No public contradiction of this history was ever put forth by the Jewish rulers to stop the progress of a hateful religion, though they had every motive to contradict it, both in justification of themselves, who were publicly charged as "*murderers*" of the "Just One," and to preserve the people from the infection of the spreading delusion. No such contradiction has been handed down, and none is adverted to or quoted by any ancient writer. This silence is not unimportant evidence, but the direct testimonies to the facts are numerous and important.

We have already quoted the testimonies of Tacitus and Suetonius to the existence of Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Christian religion, and of his crucifixion in the reign of Tiberius, and during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, the time in which the evangelists place that event. Other references to heathen authors, who incidentally allude to Christ, his religion, and followers, might be given; such as Martial, Juvenal, Epictetus, Trajan, the younger Pliny, Adrian, Apuleius, Lucian of Samosata, and others; some of whom also afford testimonies to the destruction of Jerusalem, at the time, and in the circumstances predicted by our Saviour, and to the antiquity and genuineness of the books of the New Testament. But as it is well observed by the learned Lardner, in his "Collection of Jewish and Heathen Testimonies," (vol. iv, p. 330,) "Among all the testimonies to Christianity which we have met with in the first ages, none are more valuable and important than the testimonies of those learned philosophers who wrote against us; CELSUS, in the second century, PORPHYRY and HIEROCLES in the third, and JULIAN in the fourth." Referring to LARDNER for full information on this point, a brief exhibition of the admissions of these adversaries will be satisfactory.

CELSUS wrote against Christianity not much above one hundred and thirty years after our Lord's ascension, and his books were answered by the celebrated ORIGEN. The following is a summary of the references of this writer to the Gospel history, by Leland. (*Answer to Christianity as old as the Creation,* vol. ii, c. 5.) The passages at large may be seen in Lardner's Testimonies.

Celsus, a most bitter enemy of Christianity, who began in the second century, produces many passages out of the Gospels. He represents Jesus to have lived but a few years ago. He mentions his being born of a virgin; the angel's appearing to Joseph on occasion of Mary's being with child; the star that appeared at his birth; the wise men that came to worship him when an infant; and Herod's massacreing the

children; Joseph's fleeing with the child into Egypt by the admonition of an angel; the Holy Ghost descending on Jesus like a dove when he was baptized by John, and the voice from heaven declaring him to be *the Son of God;* his going about with his disciples, his healing the sick and lame, and raising the dead; his foretelling his own sufferings and resurrection; his being betrayed and forsaken by his own disciples; his suffering both of his own accord and in obedience to his heavenly Father; his grief and trouble, and his praying, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!* the ignominious treatment he met with; the robe that was put upon him, the crown of thorns, the reed put into his hand; his drinking vinegar and gall, and his being scourged and crucified; his being seen after his resurrection by a fanatical woman, (as he calls her, meaning Mary Magdalene,) and by his own companions and disciples; his showing them his hands that were pierced, the marks of his punishment. He also mentions the angels being seen at his sepulchre, and that some said it was one angel, others, that it was two; by which he hints at the seeming variation in the accounts given of it by the evangelists.

"It is true, he mentions all these things only with a design to ridicule and expose them. But they furnish us with an uncontested proof, that the Gospel was then extant. Accordingly he expressly tells the Christians, *These things we have produced out of your own writings*, p. 106. And he all along supposeth them to have been written by Christ's own disciples, that lived and conversed with him; though he pretends they feigned many things for the honour of their Master, p. 69, 70. And he pretends, *that he could tell many other things relative to Jesus, beside those things that were written of him by his own disciples;* but *that he willingly passed by them*, p. 67. We may conclude from his expressions, both that he was sensible that these accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, (and indeed he never pretends to contest this,) and that he was not able to produce any contrary accounts to invalidate them, as he certainly would have done, if it had been in his power: since no man ever wrote with greater virulence against Christianity than he. And indeed, how was it possible for *ten or eleven publicans and boatmen*, as he calls Christ's disciples by way of contempt, (p. 47,) to have imposed such things on the world, if they had not been true, so as to persuade such vast multitudes to embrace a new and despised religion, contrary to all their prejudices and interests, and to believe in one that had been crucified!

"There are several other things, which show that Celsus was acquainted with the Gospel. He produces several of our Saviour's sayings, there recorded, as *that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;* that *to him who smites us on one cheek, we must turn the other;*

that *it is not possible to serve two masters*; his precept against *thoughtfulness for to-morrow*, by a comparison drawn from *crows and lilies*; his foretelling that false prophets should arise and work wonders. He mentions also some passages of the Apostle Paul, such as these: *The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world;—the wisdom of man is foolishness with God;—an idol is nothing.*

"The use I would make of all this is, that it appears here with an uncontested evidence, by the testimony of one of the most malicious and virulent adversaries the Christian religion ever had, and who was also a man of considerable parts and learning, that the writings of the evangelists were extant in his time, which was the next century to that in which the apostles lived; and that those accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, and consequently that they were written in the very age in which the facts related were done, and when, therefore, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have convicted them of falsehood, if they had not been true."

Porphyry flourished about the year 270, a man of great abilities; and his work against the Christians, in fifteen books, was long esteemed by the Gentiles, and thought worthy of being answered by Eusebius, and others in great repute for learning. He was well acquainted with the books of the Old and New Testaments; and in his writings are plain references to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Galatians, and probable references to the other Epistles of St. Paul. About the year 303, *Hierocles*, a man of learning and a magistrate, wrote against the Christians in two books. He was well acquainted with our Scriptures, and made many objections to them, thereby bearing testimony to their antiquity, and to the great respect which was shown them by the Christians; for he has referred both to the Gospels and to the Epistles. He mentions Peter and Paul by name, and did not deny the truth of our Saviour's miracles; but, in order to overthrow the argument which the Christians built upon them, he set up the reputed miracles of Apollonius Tyanæus to rival them. The Emperor *Julian*, who succeeded Constantius in the year 361, wrote also against the Christians, and in his work has undesignedly borne a valuable testimony to the history and books of the New Testament. He allows that Jesus was born in the reign of *Augustus*, at the time of a taxing made in Judea by *Cyrenius*. That the Christian religion had its rise, and began to be propagated, in the times of the Roman emperors *Tiberius* and *Claudius*. He bears witness to the genuineness and authenticity of *the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles*. And he so quotes them as to intimate that these were the only historical books received by Christians, as of authority; and the only authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ, and his apostles, and the doctrines preached by them He allows the early

date of the Gospels, and even argues for them. He quotes, or plainly refers to the Acts of the Apostles, as already said; to *St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians.* He does not deny the miracles of Jesus Christ, but allows him to have healed the blind, and the lame, and demoniacs, and to have rebuked the winds, and to have walked upon the waves of the sea. He endeavours, indeed, to diminish those works, but in vain. He endeavours also to lessen the number of the early believers in Jesus, but acknowledges, that there were *multitudes of such men in Greece and Italy* before St. John wrote his Gospel. He likewise affects to diminish the quality of the early believers; and yet acknowledges, that beside *men servants and maid servants, Cornelius*, a Roman centurion at Cesarea, and *Sergius Paulus*, proconsul of Cyprus, were converted to the faith of Jesus before the end of the reign of Claudius. And he often speaks with great indignation of *Peter* and *Paul*, those two great apostles of Jesus, and successful preachers of his Gospel, so that, upon the whole, he has undesignedly borne witness to the truth of many things recorded in the books of the New Testament. He aimed to overthrow the Christian religion, but has confirmed it. His arguments against it are perfectly harmless, and insufficient to unsettle the weakest Christian.

The quotations from Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian, may be consulted in Lardner, who thus sums up his observations on their testimony:—

"They bear a fuller and more valuable testimony to the books of the New Testament, and to the facts of the evangelical history, and to the affairs of Christians, than all our other witnesses beside. They proposed to overthrow the arguments for Christianity. They aimed to bring back to Gentilism those who had forsaken it, and to put a stop to the progress of Christianity, by the farther addition of new converts. But in those designs they had very little success in their own times; and their works, composed and published in the early days of Christianity, are now a testimony in our favour, and will be of use in the defence of Christianity to the latest ages.

"One thing more which may be taken notice of, is this: *that the remains of our ancient adversaries* confirm the present prevailing sentiments of Christians, concerning those books of the New Testament which we call *canonical*, and are in the greatest authority with us. For their writings show, that those very books, and not any others now generally called *apocryphal*, are the books which always were in the highest repute with Christians, and were then the rule of their faith, as they are now of ours."

To the same effect are the observations of Paley. These testimonies "prove that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or even insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they

ascribed them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this subject different from that which is holden by Christians. And when we consider how much it would have availed them to cast a doubt upon this point if they could, and how ready they showed themselves to take every advantage in their power, and that they were men of learning and inquiry, their concession, or rather their suffrage upon the subject, is extremely valuable."

That the facts and statements recorded in the evangelic history were not forgeries of a subsequent period, is made also still more indubitable from the fact, that the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are quoted or alluded to by a series of Christians, beginning with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present. "The medium of proof stated in this proposition," observes Dr. Paley, "is of all others the most unquestionable, and is not diminished by the lapse of ages. Bishop Burnet, in the History of his Own Times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon's History. *One* such assertion is a proof that Lord Clarendon's History was extant when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read and received by him as a work of Lord Clarendon's, and regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence. The application of this argument to the Gospel history is obvious. If the different books which are received by Christians as containing this history are quoted by a series of writers, as *genuine* in respect of their authors, and as *authentic* in respect to their narrative, up to the age in which the writers of them lived, then it is clear that these books must have had an existence previous to the earliest of those writings in which they are quoted, and that they were then admitted as authentic." "Their genuineness is made out, as well by the general arguments which evince the genuineness of the most indisputed remains of antiquity, as also by peculiar and specific proofs, by citations from them in writings belonging to a period immediately contiguous to that in which they were published; by the distinguished regard paid by early Christians to the authority of these books; (which regard was manifested by their collecting of them into a volume, appropriating to that volume titles of peculiar respect, translating them into various languages, disposing them into harmonies, writing commentaries upon them, and still more conspicuously by the reading of them in their public assemblies in all parts of the world;) by a universal agreement with respect to these books, while doubts were entertained concerning some others; by contending sects appealing to them; by many formal catalogues of these, as of certain and authoritative writings published in different and distant parts of the world; lastly, by the absence or defect of the above-cited topics of evidence,

when applied to any other histories of the same subject." (*Paley's Evidences*, cap. x.)

All the parts of this argument may be seen clearly made out by passages quoted from the writers of the primitive ages of the Christian Church, in Dr. Lardner's "Credibility," Dr. Paley's "Evidences," and many other writers in defence of Christianity. It is exhibited in great force also in the first volume of Horne's "Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures."

NOTE A.—Page 110.

"THE documents which claim to have been thus handed down to posterity are the five books attributed to Moses himself, and usually denominated *the Pentateuch*. Now, the question before us is, whether they were, indeed, written synchronically with the Exodus, or whether they were composed in the name of Moses, at a much later period.

"That the Jews have acknowledged the authenticity of the Pentateuch, from the present day to the era of our Lord's nativity, a period of more than eighteen centuries, admits not of a possibility of a doubt. But this era is long posterior to that of Moses himself: it will be necessary, therefore, in order to establish the point under discussion, to travel backward, step by step, so far as we can safely penetrate, according to the established rules of moral evidence.

"About two hundred and seventy-seven years before the Christian era, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, the Pentateuch, with the other books of the Old Testament, was translated into Greek, for the use of the Alexandrian Jews; and from the almost universal prevalence of that language, it henceforth became very widely disseminated, and was thus rendered accessible to the learned and inquisitive of every country.

"Now, that Greek translation which is still extant, and which is in the hands of almost every person, demonstrates that the Hebrew Pentateuch must have existed two hundred and seventy-seven years before Christ, because there is that correspondency between the two, which amply proves that the former must have been a version of the latter. But, if it certainly existed two hundred and seventy-seven years before Christ, it must have existed in the days of Ezra, at the time of the return from Babylon, in the year before Christ five hundred and thirty-six; because there is no point between those two epochs, to which, with a shadow of probability, we can ascribe its composition. It existed, therefore, in the year five hundred and thirty-six, before the Christian era.

"Thus we have gained one retrogressive step: let us next see whether, with equal certainty, we can gain another.

"As it cannot be rationally denied, that the Pentateuch has been in existence ever since the return of the Jews from Babylon, in the year five hundred and thirty-six, before the Christian era, some have thence been pleased to contend, that it was the work of Ezra; being a digested compilation of the indistinct and fabulous traditions of that people, which, like most nations of antiquity, they possessed in great abundance.

"To such an opinion, when thoroughly sifted, there are insuperable objections, however specious it may appear to a hasty observer.

"In the book of Ezra, *the law of Moses*, *the man of God*, is specifically referred to, as a well known *written* document then actually existing; and, in the

ceeding book of Nehemiah, we have an ample account of the mode in which that identical *written* document was openly read to the people, under the precise name of *the Book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.* Nor is this all: it was not that *Ezra* produced a new volume, and called upon the Jews to receive it as the authentic law of Moses; but *the people themselves* called upon Ezra to bring forth and read that book, as a work with which they had long been familiarly acquainted. The law of Moses, therefore, must have been well known to exist *in writing* previous to the return from Babylon; and as Ezra could not have produced under that name a mere compilation of oral traditions, so neither could he have suppressed the ancient volume of the law, nor have set forth instead of it, that volume which the Jews have ever since received as the authentic Pentateuch. His own book affords proof positive, that some *written* law of Moses was known previously to have existed: and the call of the people, that it should be read to them, demonstrates that it could not long have perished; for if the work had been confessedly lost for many years, the people could not have called for that, which neither they nor their fathers had ever beheld. If, then, it were suppressed by Ezra, in favour of his own spurious composition, he must both have contrived to make himself master of *every* extant copy of the genuine work, and he must have persuaded a whole people to receive as genuine, what almost every man among them must immediately have perceived to be spurious. For, if the genuine work were in existence down to the very time of Ezra, a point clearly involved in the demand of the people to have it read to them; and if the people had long been accustomed to hear it read to them, a point equally implied in their recorded demand upon Ezra, they must *all* have been adequately acquainted with its contents; and the *higher ranks* among them must have repeatedly perused, and must therefore have known the whole of it, just as intimately as Ezra could do himself. But, what was thus universally familiar could be no more set aside by the fiat of an individual in favour of his own spurious composition, than the Pentateuch could now be set aside throughout Christendom, in favour of some newly produced volume which claimed to be the genuine law of Moses. Add to this, that when the foundations of the second temple were laid, many persons were alive who well remembered the first. These consequently must have known whether there was or was not a *written* law of Moses anterior to the captivity; nor could they be deceived by the production of any novel composition by Ezra.

"Such is the evidence afforded by the very books of Ezra and Nehemiah, to the existence of a *written* law of Moses prior to the return from Babylon, of a law *familiarly known* to the whole body of the people. But there is yet another evidence to the same purpose, analogous to that furnished by the Greek translation of the seventy.

"We have now extant two Hebrew copies of the law of Moses: the one received by the Jews, the other acknowledged by the Samaritans: each maintaining that their own is the genuine record. Now, if we examine these two copies, we shall find their coincidence throughout to be such, that we cannot doubt a moment as to their original identity in every word, and in every sentence.

"We read, that after the king of Assyria had deported the ten tribes, and had colonized their territories with a mixed multitude from various parts of his dominions, the new settlers were infested by the incursions of wild beasts. This calamity, agreeably to the prevalent notion of local tutelary gods, they attributed to their not worshipping the god of the land after his own prescribed manner.—To remedy the defect, therefore, one of the deported Levitical priests was sent to

them, that he might *teach them*, as the Assyrian monarch expressed himself, *the manner of the god of the land*. The priest accordingly came among them, and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah; but while they duly received his instructions, they mixed the service of the true God with the service of their native idols. Hence, so far as that particular was concerned, we are informed, that *they neither did after their statutes, nor after their ordinances, nor after the law and commandment which Jehovah commanded the children of Jacob.*

"Now, it is obvious, that the whole of this account supposes them to have a copy of the Pentateuch; for, if the priest were to instruct them in the law of the Lord, he would, of course, communicate to them a copy of that law; and though their ancient superstitions led them to disregard its prohibitions, still it could not have been properly said of them, that *they neither did after their statutes, nor after their ordinances, nor after the law and commandment which Jehovah commanded the children of Jacob*, if all the while they were wholly unacquainted with those statutes and those ordinances, and with that law, and with that commandment. It is manifest, therefore, that they must at that time have received the copy of the Pentateuch, which they always afterward religiously preserved. But this copy is the very same as that which the Jews and ourselves still receive. Consequently, as the Samaritans received it some years prior even to the Babylonic captivity of Judah, and as it is the very same code as that which some would fain attribute to Ezra, we may be sure, that that learned scribe could not possibly have been its author, but that he has handed down to us the genuine law of Moses, with the utmost good faith and integrity.

"Here we cannot but observe the providence of God in raising up so unobjectionable a testimony as that of the Samaritans. They and the Jews cordially hated each other, and they both possessed a copy of the Pentateuch. Hence, had there been any disposition to tamper with the text, they acted as a mutual check; and the result has been, that perhaps not a wilful alteration can be shown, except the text relative to Gerizim and Ebal.

"The universal admission of the Pentateuch, as the inspired law of Moses, throughout the whole commonwealth of Israel, prior to its disruption into two hostile kingdoms, the magnificent temple of Solomon, and the whole ritual attached to it, plainly depends altogether upon the *previously existing* Pentateuch; and that code so strictly prohibits more than one practice of Solomon, that even to say nothing of the general objection from novelty, it is incredible either that he should have been its author, or that it should have been written under *his* sanction and authority.

"As little can we, with any degree of probability, ascribe it to David. His life was occupied with almost incessant troubles and warfare; and it is difficult to conceive, how a book written by that prince could, in the space of a very few years, be universally received as the inspired composition of Moses, when no person had ever previously heard that Moses left any legislative code behind him.

"The Pentateuch might be more plausibly given to Samuel than to either of those two princes; but this supposition will not stand for a moment the test of rational inquiry. We shall still have the same difficulty to contend with as before: we shall still have to point out how it was possible that Samuel should persuade all Israel to adopt, as the inspired and authoritative law of Moses, a mere modern composition of his own, which no person had ever previously heard of.

"We have now ascended to within less than four centuries after the

from Egypt, and the alleged promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai; and from Ezra to Samuel, we have found no person to whom the composition of the Pentateuch can, with any show of reason or probability, be assigned. The only remaining question is, whether it can be thought to have been written during the three hundred and fifty-six years which elapsed between the entrance of the Israelites into Palestine, and the appointment of Saul to be king of Israel.

"Now, the whole history which we have of that period utterly forbids such a supposition. The Israelites, though perpetually lapsing into idolatry, are uniformly described as acknowledging the authority of a *written* law of Moses; and this law, from generation to generation, is stated to be the directory by which the judges governed the people. Thus, Samuel expressly refers to a well known commandment of Jehovah, and to the Divine legation of Moses and Aaron, in a speech which he made to the assembled Israelites. Thus, the man of God, in his prophetic threat to Eli, similarly refers to the familiar circumstance recorded in the Pentateuch, that the house of his ancestor had been chosen to the pontificate out of all the tribes of Israel. Thus, when the nations are enumerated which were left to prove the people, it is said that they were left for this purpose, that it might be known whether the Israelites would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. Thus, Joshua is declared to have written the book which bears his name, as a supplement to a prior book, which is denominated *the book of the law of God*. Thus, likewise, he specially asserts, that *this book of the law of God* is *the book of the law of Moses;* speaking familiarly of precepts, which are written in that book; represents himself as reading its contents to all the assembled people, so that none of them could be ignorant of its purport; and mentions his writing a copy of it in the presence of the children of Israel. And thus, finally, we hear of the original, whence that copy is professed to have been taken, in the volume of the Pentateuch itself; for we are there told, that Moses with his own hand wrote the words of THIS law in a BOOK; and that he then commanded the Levites to take THIS BOOK of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant, that it might be there for a witness in all succeeding ages against the Israelites, in case they should violate its precepts." (Abridged from FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*.)

NOTE B.—Page 119.

"IN events so public and so signal, there was no room for mistake or deception. Of all the miracles recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, there is not one of which the evidence is so multiplied as that of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost; for it rests not on the testimony of those, whether many or few, who were all with one accord in one place. It is testified by all Jerusalem, and by the natives of regions far distant from Jerusalem; for there were then, says the historian, 'dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven; and when the inspiration of the disciples was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were all confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these who speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and the parts

of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.'

"It hath been objected by infidelity to the resurrection of Christ, that he ought to have appeared publicly, wherever he had appeared before his crucifixion: but here is a miracle displayed much farther than the resurrection of Christ could have been by his preaching openly, and working miracles for forty days in the temple and synagogues of Jerusalem, as he had done formerly; and this miracle is so connected with the resurrection, that if the apostles speaking a variety of tongues be admitted, the resurrection of Jesus cannot be denied.—In reply to those (probably the natives of Jerusalem,) who, imagining that the apostles uttered *gibberish*, charged them with being full of new wine, St. Peter said, 'Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; for these men are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and signs, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. *This Jesus hath God raised up*, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being *by the right hand of God exalted*, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.'

"Thus, by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of pentecost, were the resurrection and ascension of Christ proved to a variety of nations of Asia, Africa, and Europe, all the quarters of the globe which were then known, as completely as if he had actually appeared among that mixed multitude in Jerusalem, reproved the high priest and council of the Jews for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and then ascended in their presence to heaven. They had such evidence as was incontrovertible, that St. Peter and the other apostles were inspired by the Spirit of God; they could not but know, as every Theist admits, that the Spirit of God never was, nor ever will be, shed abroad to enable any order of men to propagate falsehood with success; one of those who, by this inspiration, were speaking correctly a variety of tongues, assured them, that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had slain, was raised from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God; and that the same Jesus had, according to his promise, shed abroad on the apostles that which they both saw and heard. The consequence of all this, we are told, was, that three thousand of his audience were instantly converted to the faith, and the same day incorporated into the Church by baptism.

"Would any in his senses have written a narrative of such events as these at the very time when they are said to have happened, and in any one of those countries, to the inhabitants of which he appeals as witnesses of their truth, if he had not been aware that their truth could not be called in question? Would any forger of such a book as the Acts of the Apostles, at a period *near* to that in which he relates that such astonishing events had happened, have needlessly appealed, for the truth of his narrative, to the people of all nations, and thus gone out of his way to furnish his readers with innumerable means of detecting his imposture? At *no* period, indeed, could forged books, such as the *four Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*, have been received as authentic, unless all the events which they record, whether natural or supernatural, had been believed, all the principal doctrines received, and all the rites of religion which they prescribe practised, from the very period at which they represent the Son of God as sojourning on earth, laying the foundation of his Church, dying on a cross, rising

from the dead, and ascending into heaven. The argument cannot, perhaps, be employed to prove the authenticity of all the epistles which make so great a part of the New Testament; but it is certainly as applicable to some of them as it is to the *Gospels*, and the book called the *Acts of the Apostles*.

"The apostles, as Michaelis justly observes, (*Introduction to the New Testament*, chap ii, sect. 1,) 'frequently allude, in their epistles, to the gift of miracles which they had communicated to the Christian converts by the imposition of hands, in confirmation of the doctrine delivered in their speeches and writings and sometimes to miracles, which they themselves had performed.' Now if these epistles are really genuine, the miracles referred to must certainly have been wrought, and the doctrines preached must have been Divine; for no man in his senses would have written to large communities, that he had not only performed miracles in their presence, in confirmation of the Divine origin of certain doctrines, but that he had likewise communicated to them the same extraordinary endowments. Or if we can suppose any human being to have possessed sufficient effrontery to write in this manner to any community, it is obvious that, so far from gaining credit to his doctrine by such assertions, if not known to be true, he would have exposed himself to the utmost ridicule and contempt, and have ruined the cause which he attempted to support by such absurd conduct.

"St. Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to a Christian Church, which he had lately founded, and to which he had preached the Gospel only three Sabbath days. A sudden persecution obliged him to quit this community before he had given to it its proper degree of consistence; and, what is of consequence in the present instance, he was protected neither by the power of the magistrate nor the favour of the vulgar. A pretended wonder-worker, who has once drawn the populace to his party, may easily perform his exploits, and safely proclaim them. But this very populace, at the instigation of the Jews, had excited the insurrection, which obliged St. Paul to quit the town. He sends therefore to the Thessalonians, who had received the Gospel, but whose faith, he apprehended, might waver through persecution, authorities, and proofs of his Divine mission, of which authorities the first and the chief are *miracles* and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, 1 Thess. i, 5–10.* Is it possible, now, that St. Paul, without forfeiting all pretensions to common sense, could, when writing to a Church which he had lately established, have spoken of miracles performed, and gifts of the Holy Ghost communicated, if no member of that Church had seen the one, or received the other; nay, if many members had not witnessed both the performance and the effusions of the Holy Ghost? But it is equally impossible that the epistle, making this appeal to miracles and spiritual gifts, could have been received as authentic, if forged in the name of St. Paul, at any future period, during the existence of a Christian Church at Thessalonica. In the two first chapters it represents its author and two of his companions as having been lately in that city, and appeals to the Church for the manner in which they had conducted themselves while there, and for the zeal and success with which they had preached the Gospel, and it concludes with these awful words: 'I adjure you (ορκιζω υμας) by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren;' i. e. all the Christians of the community. Had St. Paul, and Timotheus, and Sylvanus, never been in Thessalonica, or had they conducted themselves in any respect differently from what they are said to have done in the two first chapters, these chapters would have convicted the author of this epistle of forgery, at whatever time it had made its first appearance. Had they been actually there and

* See Hardy's Greek Testament; Whitby on the Place, with Schleusner and Parkhurst's Lexicons on the word δυναμις.

preached, and wrought miracles just as they are said to have done; and had some impostor, knowing this, forged the epistle before us at a considerable distance of time, the adjuration at the end of it must instantly have detected the forgery Every Thessalonian Christian of common sense would have said, 'How came we never to hear of this epistle before? Its author represents himself and two of his friends as having converted us to the faith a very short time before it was written and sent to us, and he charges those to whom it was immediately sent in the most solemn manner possible, that they should cause it to be read to every one of us; no Christian in Thessalonica would, in a matter of this kind, have dared to disobey the authority of an apostle, especially when enforced by so awful an adjuration; and yet neither we nor our fathers ever heard of this epistle, till now that Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus are all dead, and therefore incapable of either confirming or refuting its authenticity!' Such an epistle, if not genuine, could never have been received by any community.

"The same apostle, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, corrects the abuse of certain spiritual gifts, particularly that of speaking divers kinds of tongues, and prescribes rules for the employment of these supernatural talents; he enters into a particular detail of them, as they existed in the Corinthian Church; reasons on their respective worth and excellence; says that they were limited in their duration, that they were no distinguishing mark of Divine favour, nor of so great importance as faith and virtue, the love of God, and charity to our neighbours. Now, if this epistle was really written by St. Paul to the Corinthians, and they had actually received no spiritual gifts, no power, imparted by extraordinary means, of speaking foreign languages, the proper place to be assigned him were not among impostors, but among those who had lost their understanding. A juggler may deceive by the dexterity of his hands, and persuade the ignorant and the credulous that more than human means are requisite for the performance of his extraordinary feats; but he will hardly persuade those whose understandings remain unimpaired, that he has likewise communicated to his spectators the power of working miracles, and of speaking languages which they had never learned. were they conscious of their inability to perform the one, or to speak the other. If the epistle, therefore, was written during the life of St. Paul, and received by the Corinthian Church, it is impossible to doubt but that St. Paul was its author, and that among the Corinthians were prevalent those spiritual gifts of which he labours to correct the abuse. If those gifts were never prevalent among the Corinthian Christians, and this epistle was not seen by them until the next age, it could not have been received by the Corinthian Church as the genuine writing of the apostle, because the members of that Church must have been aware that if those gifts, of which it speaks, had been really possessed, and so generally displayed by their fathers, as it represents them to have been, some of themselves would surely have heard their fathers mention them; and as the epistle treats of some of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of man, the introduction of death into the world through Adam, and the resurrection of the dead through Christ, they must have inferred that their fathers would not have secreted from them their children a treatise on topics so interesting to the whole human race." (*Gleig's Edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible*, vol. iii. *Intro.* p. 11, &c.)

CHAPTER XIII.

The uncorrupted Preservation of the Books of Scripture.

The historical evidence of the antiquity and genuineness of the books ascribed to Moses, and those which contain the history of Christ and the establishment of his religion, being thus complete, the integrity of the copies at present received is the point next in question.

With respect to the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the list of Josephus, the Septuagint translation, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, are sufficient proofs that the books which are received by us as sacred, are the same as those received by the Jews and Samaritans long before the Christian era. For the New Testament; beside the quotations from almost all the books now included in that volume and references to them by name in the earliest Christian writers, catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published at very early periods, which, says Dr. Paley, "though numerous, and made in countries at a wide distance from one another, differ very little, differ in nothing material, and all contain the four Gospels.

"In the writings of Origen which remain, and in some extracts preserved by Eusebius, from works of his which are now lost, there are enumerations of the books of Scripture, in which the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are distinctly and honourably specified, and in which no books appear beside what are now received. (*Lard. Cred.* vol. iii, p. 234, et seq., vol. viii, p. 196.) The date of Origen's works is A. D. 230.

"Athanasius, about a century afterward, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament in form, containing our Scriptures and no others; of which he says, 'In these alone the doctrine of religion is taught; let no man add to them, or take any thing from them.' (*Lard. Cred.* vol. viii, p. 223.)

"About twenty years after Athanasius, Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, set forth a catalogue of the books of Scripture publicly read at that time in the Church of Jerusalem, exactly the same as ours, except that the 'Revelation' is omitted. (*Lard. Cred.* vol. viii, p. 270.)

"And, fifteen years after Cyril, the council of Laodicea delivered an authoritative catalogue of canonical Scripture, like Cyril's, the same as ours with the omission of the 'Revelation.'

"Catalogues now become frequent. Within thirty years after the last date, that is, from the year 363 to near the conclusion of the fourth century, we have catalogues by Epiphanius, (*Lard. Cred.* vol. viii, p. 368,) by Gregory Nazianzen, (*Lard. Cred.* vol. ix, p. 132,) by Philaster, bishop of Brescia in Italy, (*Lard. Cred.* vol. ix, p. 373,) by Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, all, as they are sometimes called, *clean*

catalogues, (that is, they admit no books into the number beside what we now receive,) and all, for every purpose of historic evidence, the same as ours. (3)

"Within the same period, Jerome, the most learned Christian writer of his age, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament, recognizing every book now received, with the intimation of a doubt concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews alone, and taking not the least notice of any book which is not now received. (*Lard. Cred*, vol. x, p. 77.)

"Contemporary with Jerome, who lived in Palestine, was Saint Augustine, in Africa, who published likewise a catalogue, without joining to the Scriptures, as books of authority, any other ecclesiastical writing whatever, and without omitting one which we at this day acknowledge (*Lard. Cred.* vol. x, p. 213.)

"And with these concurs another contemporary writer, Rufen, presbyter of Aquileia, whose catalogue, like theirs, is perfect and unmixed, and concludes with these remarkable words: 'These are the volumes which the fathers have included in the canon, and out of which they would have us prove the doctrine of our faith.'" (*Lard. Cred.* vol. x, page 187.)

This, it is true, only proves that the books are *substantially* the same; but the evidence is abundant, that they have descended to us without any material alteration whatever.

"1. *Before that event*, [the time of Christ,] the regard which was paid to them by the Jews, especially to the law, would render any forgery or material change in their contents impossible. The law having been the deed by which the land of Canaan was divided among the Israelites, it is improbable that this people who possessed that land, would suffer it to be altered or falsified. The distinction of the twelve tribes, and their separate interests, made it more difficult to alter their law than that of other nations less jealous than the Jews. Farther, at certain stated seasons, the law was publicly read before all the people of Israel, Deut. xxxi, 9–13; Joshua viii, 34, 35; Neh. viii, 1–5; and it was appointed to be kept in the ark, for a constant memorial against those who transgressed it, Deut. xxxi, 26. Their king was required to *write him a copy of this law in a book, out of* that which is *before the priests, the Levites, and to read therein all the days of his life*, Deut. xvii, 18, 19; their priests also were commanded to *teach the children of Israel all the statutes, which the Lord had spoken to them by the hand of Moses*, Levit. x, 11; and parents were charged not only to make it familiar to themselves, but also to teach it diligently to their children, Deut.

(3) Epiphanius omits the Acts of the Apostles. This must have been an accidental mistake, either in him or in some copyist of his work; for he elsewhere expressly refers to this book, and ascribes it to Luke

xvii, 18, 19; beside which, a severe prohibition was annexed, against either making any addition to, or diminution from the law, Deut. iv, 2; xii, 32. Now such precepts as these could not have been given by an impostor who was adding to it, and who would wish men to forget rather than enjoin them to remember it: for, as all the people were obliged to know and observe the law under severe penalties, they were, in a manner, the trustees and guardians of the law, as well as the priests and Levites. The people, who were to teach their children must have had copies of it; the priests and Levites must have had copies of it; and the magistrates must have had copies of it, as being the law of the land. Farther, after the people were divided into two kingdoms, both the people of Israel and those of Judah still retained the same book of the law: and the rivalry or enmity that subsisted between the two kingdoms, prevented either of them from altering or adding to the law. After the Israelites were carried captive into Assyria, other nations were placed in the cities of Samaria in their stead; and the Samaritans received the Pentateuch, either from the priest who was sent by order of the king of Assyria, to instruct them in the *manner of the God of the land*, 2 Kings xvii, 26, or several years afterward from the hands of Manasseh, the son of Joiada the high priest, who was expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah, for marrying the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria; and who was constituted, by Sanballat, the first high priest of the temple at Samaria. (Neh. viii, 28; *Josephus Ant. Jud.* lib. xi, c. 8; *Bishop Newton's Works*, vol. i, p. 23.) Now, by one or both of these means, the Samaritans had the Pentateuch as well as the Jews; but with this difference, that the Samaritan Pentateuch was in the old Hebrew or Phenician characters, in which it remains to this day; whereas the Jewish copy was changed into Chaldee characters, (in which it also remains to this day,) which were fairer and clearer than the Hebrew, the Jews having learned the Chaldee language during their seventy years abode in Babylon The jealousy and hatred which subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, made it impracticable for either nation to corrupt or alter the text in any thing of consequence without certain discovery; and the general agreement between the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of the Pentateuch, which are now extant, is such, as plainly demonstrates that the copies were originally the same. Nor can any better evidence be desired, that the Jewish Bibles have not been corrupted or interpolated, than this very book of the Samaritans; which, after more than two thousand years discord between the two nations, varies as little from the other as any classic author in less tract of time has disagreed from itself by the unavoidable slips and mistakes of so many transcribers. (4)

(4) Dr. BENTLEY's Remarks on Freethinking, part i, remark 27, (vol. v. p. 144, of Bp. RANDOLPH's Enchiridion Theologicum, 8vo. Oxford, 1792.)

"After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the books of the law and the prophets were publicly read in their synagogues every Sabbath day, Acts xiii, 14, 15, 27; Luke iv, 17–20; which was an excellent method of securing their purity, as well as of enforcing the observation of the law. The Chaldee paraphrases and the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which were afterward made, were so many additional securities. To these facts we may add, that the reverence of the Jews for their sacred writings is another guarantee for their integrity: so great, indeed, was that reverence, that, according to the statements of Philo and Josephus, (*Philo, apud Euseb. de Præp. Evang.* lib. viii, c. 2; *Josephus contra Apion.* lib. i, sec. 8,) they would suffer any torments, and even death itself, rather than change a single point or iota of the Scriptures. A law was also enacted by them, which denounced him to be guilty of inexpiable sin, who should presume to make the slightest possible alteration in their sacred books. The Jewish doctors, fearing to add any thing to the law, passed their own notions as traditions or explanations of it; and both Jesus Christ and his apostles accused the Jews of entertaining a prejudiced regard for those traditions, but they never charged them with falsifying or corrupting the Scriptures themselves.

"2. *After the birth of Christ.* For, since that event, the Old Testament has been held in high esteem both by Jews and Christians. The Jews also frequently suffered martyrdom for their Scriptures, which they would not have done, had they suspected them to have been corrupted or altered. Beside, the Jews and Christians were a mutual guard upon each other, which must have rendered any material corruption impossible, if it had been attempted: for if such an attempt had been made by the *Jews*, they would have been detected by the Christians. The accomplishment of such a design, indeed, would have been impracticable from the moral impossibility of the Jews (who were dispersed in every country of the then known world) being able to collect all the then existing copies, with the intention of corrupting or falsifying them. On the other hand, if any such attempt had been made by the *Christians*, it would assuredly have been detected by the Jews: nor could any such attempt have been made by any other man or body of men, without exposure both by Jews and Christians. To these considerations, it may be added, that the admirable agreement of all the ancient paraphrases and versions, and the writings of Josephus, with the Old Testament as it is now extant, together with the quotations which are made from it in the New Testament, and in the writings of all ages to the present time, forbid us to indulge any suspicion of any material corruption in the books of the Old Testament; and give us every possible evidence of which a subject of this kind is capable, that these books are now in our hands genuine and unadulterated.

"3. Lastly, the *agreement of all the manuscripts* of the Old Testament, (amounting to nearly eleven hundred and fifty,) which are known to be extant, is a clear proof of its uncorrupted preservation. These manuscripts, indeed, are not all entire; some contain one part, and some another. But it is absolutely impossible that *every* manuscript, whether in the original Hebrew, or in any ancient version or paraphrase, should or could be *designedly* altered or falsified in the *same* passages, without detection either by Jews or Christians. The manuscripts now extant are, confessedly, liable to errors and mistakes from the carelessness, negligence, or inaccuracy of copyists; but they are not *all* uniformly incorrect throughout, nor in the same words or passages; but what is incorrect in one place is correct in another. Although the various readings, which have been discovered by learned men, who have applied themselves to the collection of every known manuscript of the Hebrew Scriptures, amount to many thousands, yet these differences are of so little *real* moment, that their laborious collations afford us scarcely any opportunities of correcting the sacred text in important passages. So far, however, are these extensive and profound researches from being either trivial or nugatory, that we have in fact derived from them the greatest advantage which could have been wished for by any real friend of revealed religion; namely, the certain knowledge of the agreement of the copies of the ancient Scriptures, now extant in their original language, with each other, and with our Bibles. (*Bishop* TOMLINE'S *Elements of Christ, Theol.* vol i, p. 31.)

"Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the integrity and uncorruptness of the New Testament in any thing material. The testimonies, adduced in the preceding section in behalf of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, are, in a great measure, applicable to show that it has been transmitted to us entire and uncorrupted. But to be more particular, we remark, that the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament is manifest,

"1. *From their contents;* for, so early as the two first centuries of the Christian era, we find the very same *facts*, and the very same *doctrines* universally received by Christians, which we of the present day believe on the credit of the New Testament.

"2. *Because a universal corruption of those writings was impossible, nor can the least vestige of such a corruption be found in history.* They could not be corrupted during the life of their authors; and before their death, copies were dispersed among the different communities of Christians, who were scattered throughout the then known world. Within twenty years after the ascension, Churches were formed in the principal cities of the Roman empire; and in all these Churches the books of the New Testament, especially the four Gospels, were read as a part of their public worship, just as the writings of Moses and the prophets were read in

the Jewish synagogues. (5) Nor would the use of them be confined to public worship; for these books were not, like the Sybilline oracles, locked up from the perusal of the public, but were exposed to public investigation. When the books of the New Testament were first published to the world, the Christians would naturally entertain the highest esteem and reverence for writings that delivered an *authentic* and inspired history of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, and would be desirous of possessing such an invaluable treasure. Hence, as we learn from unquestionable authority, copies were multiplied and disseminated as rapidly as the boundaries of the Church increased; and translations were made into as many languages as were spoken by its professors, some of which remain to this day; so that it would very soon be rendered absolutely impossible to corrupt these books in any one important word or phrase. Now, it is not to be supposed, (without violating all probability,) that *all* Christians should agree in a design of changing or corrupting the original books; and if *some* only should make the attempt, the uncorrupted copies would still remain to detect them. And supposing there was some error in one translation or copy, or something changed, added, or taken away; yet there were many other copies and other translations, by the help of which the neglect or fraud might be or would be corrected.

"Farther, as these books could not be corrupted during the life of their respective authors, and while a great number of witnesses were alive to attest the facts which they record: so neither could any material alteration take place after their decease, without being detected while the original manuscripts were preserved in the Churches. The Christians who were instructed by the apostles or by their immediate successors, travelled into all parts of the world, carrying with them copies of their writings; from which other copies were multiplied and preserved. Now, as we have already seen, we have an unbroken series of testimonies for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, which can be traced backward, from the fourth century of the Christian era to the very time of the apostles: and these very testimonies are equally applicable to prove its uncorrupted preservation. Moreover, harmonies of the four Gospels were anciently constructed; commentaries were written upon them, as well as upon the other books of the New Testament, (many of which are still extant,) manuscripts were collated, and editions of the New Testament were put forth. These sacred records, being universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, were received by every class of Christians with peculiar

(5) Dr. LARDNER has collected numerous instances in the second part of his Credibility of the Gospel History; references to which may be seen in the general index to his works, article *Scriptures*. See particularly the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine

respect, as being Divine compositions, and possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Whatever controversies, therefore, arose among different sects, (and the Church was very early rent with fierce contentions on doctrinal points,) the Scriptures of the New Testament were received and appealed to by every one of them, as being conclusive in all matters of controversy: consequently it was morally impossible, that any man or body of men should corrupt or falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into them a single expression to favour their peculiar tenets, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands.

"If any material alteration had been attempted by the orthodox, it would have been detected by the heretics; and, on the other hand, if a heretic had inserted, altered, or falsified any thing, he would have been exposed by the orthodox, or by other heretics. It is well known that a division commenced in the fourth century, between the eastern and western Churches, which, about the middle of the ninth century, became irreconcilable, and subsists to the present day. Now, it would have been impossible to alter all the copies in the eastern empire; and if it had been possible in the east, the copies in the west would have detected the alteration. But, in fact, both the eastern and western copies agree, which could not be expected if either of them was altered or falsified. The uncorrupted preservation of the New Testament is farther evident,

"3. *From the agreement of all the manuscripts.* The manuscripts of the New Testament, which are extant, are far more numerous than those of any *single* classic author whomsoever; upward of three hundred and fifty were collected by Griesbach, for his celebrated critical edition. These manuscripts, it is true, are not all entire: most of them contain only the Gospels; others, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; and a few contain the Apocalypse or Revelation of John. But they were all written in very different and distant parts of the world; several of them are upward of twelve hundred years old, and give us the books of the New Testament, in all essential points, perfectly accordant with each other, as any person may readily ascertain by examining the critical editions published by Mill, Kuster, Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach. The *thirty thousand* various readings which are said to be found in the manuscripts collated by Dr. Mill, and the *hundred and fifty thousand* which Griesbach's edition is said to contain, in no degree whatever affect the general credit and integrity of the text. In fact, the more copies are multiplied, and the more numerous the transcripts and translations from the original, the more likely is it, that the genuine text and the true original reading will be investigated and ascertained. The most correct and accurate ancient classics now extant are those of which we have the greatest number of manuscripts; and the most *depraved*, *mutilated*, and *inaccurate* editions of the old writers

are those of which we have the fewest manuscripts, and perhaps only a single manuscript extant. Such are Athenæus, Clemens Romanus, Hesychius, and Photius. But of this formidable mass of various readings, which have been collected by the diligence of collators, not one tenth,—nay, not one hundredth part, either makes or can make any perceptible, or at least any material, alteration in the sense in any modern version. They consist almost wholly of palpable errors in transcription, grammatical and verbal differences, such as the insertion or omission of an article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, and the transposition of a word or two in a sentence. Even the few that do change the sense, affect it only in passages relating to unimportant, historical, and geographical circumstances, or other collateral matters; and the still smaller number that make any alteration in things of consequence, do not on that account place us in any absolute uncertainty. For, either the true reading may be discovered by collating the other manuscripts, versions, and quotations found in the works of the ancients; or, should these fail to give us the requisite information, we are enabled to explain the doctrine in question from other *undisputed* passages of holy writ.

"4. The last testimony to be adduced for the integrity and uncorruptness of the New Testament, is furnished by the *agreement of the ancient versions and quotations from it, which are made in the writings of the Christians of the first three centuries, and in those of the succeeding fathers of the Church.*

"The testimony of versions, and the evidence of the ecclesiastical fathers, have already been noticed as a proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. The quotations from the New Testament in the writings of the fathers are so numerous, that (as it has frequently been observed) the whole body of the Gospels and Epistles might be compiled from the various passages dispersed in their commentaries and other writings. And though these citations were, in many instances, made from memory, yet, being always made with due attention to the sense and meaning, and most commonly with a regard to the words as well as to the *order* of the words, they correspond with the original records from which they were extracted:—an irrefragable argument this, of the purity and integrity with which the New Testament has been preserved." (HORNE's *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. i, chap. 2, sect. 3.)

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE SACRED WRITERS.

THE proofs of the existence and actions of Moses and Christ, the founders of the Jewish and Christian religions, having been adduced,

with those of the antiquity and uncorrupted preservation of the records which profess to contain the facts of their history, and the doctrines they taught, the only question to be determined before we examine those miracles and prophecies on which the claim of the Divine authority of their mission rests, is, whether these records *faithfully* record the transactions of which they give us information, and on which the Divinity of both systems, the Jewish and the Christian, is built. To deny this because we object to the doctrines taught, is equally illogical and perverse, as it is assuming the doctrine to be false before we have considered all the evidence which may be adduced in its favour; to deny it because we have already determined to reject the miracles, is equally absurd and impious. It has already been proved, that miracles are possible; and whether the transactions related as such in the Scriptures be really miraculous or not, is a subsequent inquiry to that which respects the faithful recording of them. If the evidence of this is insufficient, the examination of the miracles is unnecessary; if it is strong and convincing, that examination is a subject of very serious import.

We might safely rest the faithfulness of the Scriptural record upon the argument of Leslie, before adduced; but, from the superabundance of evidence which the case furnishes, some amplifications may be added, which we shall confine principally to the authors of the New Testament.

There are four circumstances which never fail to give credibility to a witness, whether he depose to any thing orally or in writing:—

1. That he is a person of virtuous and sober character.

2. That he was in circumstances certainly to know the truth of what he relates.

3. That he has no interest in making good the story.

4. That his account is circumstantial.

In the highest degree these guarantees of faithful and exact testimony meet in the evangelists and apostles.

That they were persons of strict and exemplary *virtue*, must by all candid persons be acknowledged; so much so, that nothing to the contrary was ever urged against the integrity of their conduct by the most malicious enemies of Christianity. Avarice and interest could not sway them, for they voluntarily abandoned all their temporal connections, and embarked in a cause which the world regarded, to the last degree, as wretched and deplorable. Of their sincerity they gave the utmost proof in the openness of their testimony, never affecting reserve, or shunning inquiry. They delivered their testimony before kings and princes, priests and magistrates, in Jerusalem and Judea, where their Master lived and died, and in the most populous, inquisitive, and learned parts of the world, submitting its evidences to a fair and impartial examination.

"Their minds were so penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the Gospel, that they esteemed it their distinguished honour and privilege to seal their attestation to it by their sufferings, and blessed God that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach and shame for their profession. *Passing through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true.* Never dejected, never intimidated by any sorrows and sufferings they supported; but when stoned, imprisoned, and persecuted in one city, flying to another, and there preaching the Gospel with intrepid boldness and heaven-inspired zeal. Patient in tribulation, fervent in spirit, rejoicing under persecution, calm and composed under calumny and reproach, praying for their enemies, when in dungeons cheering the silent hours of night with hymns of praise to God. Meeting death itself in the most dreadful forms with which persecuting rage could dress it, with a serenity and exultation the Stoic philosophy never knew. In all these public scenes showing to the world a heart infinitely above what men vulgarly style great and happy, infinitely remote from ambition, the lust of gold, and a passion for popular applause, working with their own hands to raise a scanty subsistence for themselves that they might not be burdensome to the societies they had formed, holding up to all with whom they conversed, in the bright faithful mirror of their own behaviour, the amiableness and excellency of the religion they taught, and in every scene and circumstance of life distinguished for their devotion to God, their unconquered love for mankind, their sacred regard for truth, their self government, moderation, humanity, sincerity, and every Divine, social, and moral virtue that can adorn and exalt a character. Nor are there any features of *enthusiasm* in the writings they have left us. We meet with no frantic fervours indulged, no monkish abstraction from the world recommended, no maceration of the body countenanced, no unnatural institutions established, no vain flights of fancy cherished, no absurd and irrational doctrines taught, no disobedience to any forms of human government encouraged but all civil establishments and social connections suffered to remain in the *same* state they were *before* Christianity. So far were the *apostles* from being *enthusiasts*, and instigated by a wild undiscerning religious phrenzy to rush into the jaws of death, when they might have honourably and lawfully escaped it, that we find them, when they could, without wounding their consciences, legally extricate themselves from persecution and death, pleading their privileges as *Roman* citizens, and appealing to Cesar's supreme jurisdiction." (HARWOOD's *Introduction to the New Testament.*)

As it was contrary to their character to attempt to deceive others, so they could not be *deceived* themselves. They could not mistake in the case of feeding of the five thousand, and the sudden healing of lepers, and lame and blind persons; they could not but know, whether he with

whom they conversed for forty days was the same Jesus, as he with whom they had daily and familiar intercouse long before his crucifixion They could not mistake as to his ascension into heaven; as to the fact whether they themselves were suddenly endowed with the power of speaking in languages which they had never acquired; and whether they were able to work miracles, and to impart the same powor to others.

They were not only *disinterested* in their testimony; but their interests were on the side of concealment. One of the evangelists, Matthew, occupied a lucrative situation when called by Jesus, and was evidently an opulent man; the fishermen of Galilee were at least in circumstances of comfort, and never had any worldly inducement held out to them by their Master; Nicodemus was a ruler among the Jews; Joseph of Arimathea "a rich man;" and St. Paul, both from his education, connections, and talents, had encouraging prospects in life: but of himself, and of his fellow labourers, he speaks, and describes all the earthly rewards they obtained for testifying both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the Christ,—"*Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.*" Finally, they sealed their testimony in many instances with their blood, a circumstance of which they had been forewarned by their Master, and in the daily expectation of which they lived. From this the conclusion of Dr. Paley is irresistible, "These men could not be deceivers. By only not bearing testimony they might have avoided all their sufferings, and have lived quietly. Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw; assert facts of which they had no knowledge; go about lying, to teach virtue; and though not only convinced of Christ's being an impostor, but having seen the success of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying it on, and so persist as to bring upon themselves, for nothing and with a full knowledge of the consequence, enmity and hatred, danger and death?"

To complete the character of their testimony, it is in the highest degree *circumstantial*. We never find that forged or false accounts of things abound in particularities; and where many particulars are related of time, place, persons, &c, there is always a strong presumption of truth, and on the contrary. Here the evidence is more than presumptive. The history of the evangelists and of the Acts of the Apostles is so full of reference to persons then living, and often persons of consequence, to places in which miracles and other transactions took place publicly and not in secret; and the application of all these facts by the first propagators of the Christian religion to give credit to its Divine authority was so frequent and explicit, and often so reproving to their opposers

that if they had not been true they must have been contradicted · and if contradicted on good evidence, the authors must have been overwhelmed with confusion. This argument is rendered the stronger when it is considered that "these things were not done in a corner," nor was the age dark and illiterate and prone to admit fables. The *Augustan age* was the most learned the world ever saw. The love of arts, sciences, and literature, was the universal passion in almost every part of the Roman empire, where Christianity was first taught in its doctrines, and proclaimed in its facts; and in this inquisitive and discerning era, it rose, flourished, and established itself, with much resistance to its doctrines, *but without being once questioned as to the truth of its historical facts.*

Yet how easily might they have been disproved had they been false—that Herod the Great was not the sovereign of Judea when our Lord was born—that wise men from the east did not come to be informed of the place of his birth—and that Herod did not convene the sanhedrim, to inquire where their expected Messiah was to be born—that the infants in Bethlehem were not massacred—that in the time of Augustus all Judea was not enrolled by an imperial edict—that Simeon did not take the infant in his arms and proclaim him to be the expected salvation of Israel, which is stated to have been done publicly in the temple, before all the people—that the numerous persons, many of whose names are mentioned, and some the relatives of rulers and centurions, were not miraculously healed nor raised from the dead—that the resurrection of Lazarus, stated to have been done publicly, near to Jerusalem, and himself a respectable person, well known, did not occur—that the circumstances of the trial, condemnation, and crucifixion of Christ, did not take place as stated by his disciples; in particular, that Pilate did not wash his hands before them and give his testimony to the character of our Lord; that there was no preternatural darkness from twelve to three in the afternoon on the day of the crucifixion; and that there was no earthquake; facts which if they did not occur could have been contradicted by thousands: finally, that these well-known unlettered men, the apostles, were not heard to speak with tongues by many who were present in the assembly in which this was said to take place. But we might select almost all the circumstances out of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and show, that for the most part they were capable of being contradicted at the time when they were first published, and that the immense number of circumstances mentioned would in aftertimes have furnished acute investigators of the history with the means of detecting its falsehood had it not been indubitable, either by comparing the different relations with each other, or with some well authenticated facts of accredited collateral history. On the contrary, the small variations in the story of the evangelists are confirmations of their testimony, being

in proof that there was no concert among them to impose upon the world, and they do not affect in the least the facts of the history itself; while as far as collateral, or immediately subsequent history has given its evidence, we have already seen, that it is confirmatory of the exactness and accuracy of the sacred penmen.

For all these reasons, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are to be taken as a faithful and uncorrupted record of the transactions they exhibit; and nothing now appears to be necessary, but that this record be examined in order to determine its claims to be admitted as the deposit of the standing revelations of the will of God to mankind. The evidence of the genuineness and authenticity of the books of which it is composed, at least such of them as is necessary to the argument, is full and complete; and if certain of the facts which they detail are proved to be really *miraculous*, and the prophecies they record are in the proper sense *predictive*, then, according to the principles before established, the conclusion must be, THAT THE DOCTRINES WHICH THEY ATTEST ARE DIVINE. This shall be the next subject examined; minor objections being postponed to be answered in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MIRACLES OF SCRIPTURE.

IT has been already proved that miracles are possible, that they are appropriate, necessary, and satisfactory evidences of a revelation from God: and that, like other facts, they are capable of being authenticated by credible testimony. These points having been established, the main questions before us are, whether the facts alleged as miraculous in the Old and New Testaments have a sufficient claim to that character, and whether they were wrought in confirmation of the doctrine and mission of the founders of the Jewish and Christian religions.

That definition of a true miracle which we have adopted, may here be conveniently repeated:—

A miracle is an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the concurrence, or by the permission of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person.

The force of the argument from miracles lies in this—that as such works are manifestly above human power, and as no created being can effect them, unless empowered by the Author of nature, when they are wrought for such an end as that mentioned in the definition, they are to

be considered as authentications of a Divine mission by a special and sensible interposition of God himself.

To adduce all the extraordinary works wrought by Moses and by Christ would be unnecessary. In those we select for examination, the miraculous character will sufficiently appear to bring them within our definition; and it will be recollected that it has been already established that the books which contain the account of these facts must have been written by their reputed authors, and that had not the facts themselves occurred as there related, it is impossible that the people of the age in which the accounts of them were published could have been brought to believe them. On the basis then of the arguments already adduced to prove these great points, it is concluded that we have in the Scriptures a true relation of the facts themselves. Nothing therefore remains but to establish their claims as *miracles*.

Out of the numerous miracles wrought by the agency of Moses we select, in addition to those before mentioned in chapter ix, *the plague of* DARKNESS. Two circumstances are to be noted in the relation given of this event, Exodus x. It continued three days, and it afflicted the Egyptians only, for "*all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*" The fact here mentioned was of the most public kind: and had it not taken place, every Egyptian and every Israelite could have contradicted the account. The phenomenon was not produced by an eclipse of the sun, for no eclipse of that luminary can endure so long. Some of the Roman writers mention a darkness by day so great that persons were unable to know each other; but we have no historical account of any other darkness so long continued as this, and so intense, that the Egyptians "*rose not up from their places for three days.*" But if any such circumstance had again occurred, and a natural cause could have been assigned for it, yet even then the miraculous character of this event would remain unshaken; for to what but to a supernatural cause could the distinction made between the Israelites and the Egyptians be attributed, when they inhabited a portion of the same country, and when their neighbourhoods were immediately adjoining? Here then are the characters of a true miracle. The established course of natural causes and effects is interrupted by an operation upon that mighty element, the atmosphere. That it was not a chance irregularity in nature, is made apparent from the effect following the volition of a man acting in the name of the Lord of nature, and from its being restrained by that to a certain part of the same country—"*Moses stretched out his hand,*" and the darkness prevailed, every where but in the dwellings of his own people. The *fact* has been established by former arguments, and the fact being allowed, the *miracle* of necessity follows.

The destruction of the FIRST BORN of the Egyptians may be next considered. Here too are several circumstances to be carefully noted

This judgment was threatened in the presence of Pharaoh, *before* any of the other plagues were brought upon him and his people. The Israelites also were forewarned of it. They were directed to slay a lamb, sprinkle the blood upon their door posts, and prepare for their departure that same night. The stroke was inflicted upon the first born of the Egyptians only, and not upon any other part of the family—it occurred in the same hour—the first born of the Israelites escaped without exception—and the festival of "the passover" was from that night instituted in remembrance of the event. Such a festival could not in the nature of the thing be established in any subsequent age, in commemoration of an event which never occurred; and if instituted at the time, the event must have taken place, for by no means could this large body of men have been persuaded that their first born had been saved and those of the Egyptians destroyed, if the facts had not been before their eyes. The history therefore being established, the *miracle* follows; for the order of nature is sufficiently known to warrant the conclusion, that, if a pestilence were to be assumed as the agent of this calamity, an epidemic disease, however rapid and destructive, comes not upon the threat of a mortal, and makes no such selection as the first born of every family.

The miracle of dividing the waters of the Red Sea has already been mentioned, but merits more particular consideration. In this event we observe, as in the others, circumstances which exclude all possibility of mistake or collusion. The subject of the miracle is the sea; the witnesses of it the host of Israel, who passed through on foot, and the Egyptian nation, who lost their king and his whole army. The miraculous characters of the event are:—The waters are divided, and stand up on each side;—the instrument is a strong east wind, which begins its operation upon the waters at the stretching out of the hand of Moses, and ceases at the same signal, and that at the precise moment when the return of the waters would be most fatal to the Egyptian pursuing army.

It has, indeed, been asked whether there were not some ledges of rocks where the water was shallow, so that an army, at particular times, might pass over; and whether the *Etesian* winds, which blow strongly all summer from the northwest, might not blow so violently against the sea as to keep it back "on a heap." But if there were any force in these questions, it is plain that such suppositions would leave the destruction of the Egyptians unaccounted for. To show that there is no weight in them at all, let the place where the passage of the Red Sea was effected be first noted. Some fix it near *Suez*, at the head of the gulf; but if there were satisfactory evidence of this, it ought also to be taken into the account, that formerly the gulf extended at least twenty-five miles north of Suez, the place where it terminates at present.

(*Lord Valentia's Travels*, vol. iii, p. 344.) But the names of places as well as tradition, fix the passage about ten hours' journey lower down, at *Clysma*, or the valley of *Bedea*. The name given by Moses to the place where the Israelites encamped before the sea was divided, was *Pihahiroth*, which signifies "the mouth of the ridge," or of that chain of mountains which line the western coast of the Red Sea; and as there is but one mouth of that chain through which an immense multitude of men, women, and children, could possibly pass when flying before their enemies, there can be no doubt whatever respecting the situation of *Pihahiroth*; and the modern names of conspicuous places in its neighbourhood prove, that those, by whom such names were given, believed that this was the place at which the Israelites passed the sea in safety, and where Pharaoh was drowned. Thus, we have close by *Pihahiroth*, on the western side of the gulf, a mountain called *Attaka*, which signifies deliverance. On the eastern coast opposite is a headland called *Ras Musa*, or "the Cape of Moses;" somewhat lower, *Harnam Faraun*, "Pharaoh's Springs;" while at these places, the general name of the gulf itself is *Bahr-al-Kolsum*, "the Bay of Submersion," in which there is a whirlpool called *Birket Faraun*, "the Pool of Pharaoh." This, then, was the passage of the Israelites; and the depth of the sea here is stated by Bruce, who may be consulted as to these localities, at about fourteen fathoms, and the breadth at between three and four leagues. But there is no "ledge of rocks," and as to the "*Etesian* wind," the same traveller observes, "If the *Etesian* wind blowing from the northwest in summer, could keep the sea as a wall, on the right, of fifty feet high, still the difficulty would remain of building the wall to the left, or to the north. If the *Etesian* winds had done this once, they must have repeated it many a time before or since, from the same causes." The wind which actually did blow, according to the history, either as an instrument of dividing the waters, or, which is more probable, as the instrument of drying the ground, after the waters were divided by the immediate energy of the Divine power, was not a north wind, but an "east wind;" and as Dr. Hales observes, "seems to be introduced by way of anticipation, to exclude the *natural* agency which might be afterward resorted to for solving the miracle; for it is remarkable that the *monsoon* in the Red Sea blows the summer half of the year from the north, and the winter half from the south, neither of which could produce the miracle in question."

The miraculous character of this event is, therefore, most strongly marked An expanse of water, and that water a sea, of from nine to twelve miles broad, known to be exceedingly subject to agitations, is divided, and a wall of water is formed on each hand, affording a passage on dry land for the Israelites. The phenomenon occurs too just as the Egyptian host are on the point of overtaking the fugitives. and ceases at

the moment when the latter reach the opposite shore in safety, and when their enemies are in the midst of the passage, in the only position in which the closing of the wall of waters on each side could insure the entire destruction of so large a force!

The falling of the MANNA in the wilderness for forty years, is another unquestionable miracle, and one in which there could be neither mistake on the part of those who were sustained by it, nor fraud on the part of Moses. That this event was not produced by the ordinary course of nature, is rendered certain by the fact, that the same wilderness has been travelled by individuals, and by large bodies of men, from the earliest ages to the present, but no such supply of food was ever met with, except on this occasion; and its miraculous character is farther marked by the following circumstances:—1. That it fell but six days in the week: 2. That it fell in such prodigious quantities as sustained three millions of souls: 3. That there fell a double quantity every Friday, to serve the Israelites for the next day, which was their Sabbath: 4. That what was gathered on the first five days of the week stank and bred worms, if kept above one day; but that which was gathered on Friday kept sweet for two days: and 5. That it continued falling while the Israelites remained in the wilderness, but ceased as soon as they came out of it, and got corn to eat in the land of Canaan. (*Universal History*, l. 1, c. 7.) Let these very extraordinary particulars be considered, and they at once confirm the fact, while they unequivocally establish the miracle. No people could be deceived in these circumstances; no person could persuade them of their truth, if they had not occurred; and the whole was so clearly out of the regular course of nature, as to mark unequivocally the interposition of God. To the majority of the numerous miracles recorded in the Old Testament, the same remarks apply, and upon them the same miraculous characters are as indubitably impressed. If we proceed to those of Christ, the evidence becomes, if possible, more indubitable. They were clearly above the power of either human agency or natural causes: they were *public:* they were such as could not admit of collusion or deception: they were performed under such circumstances as rendered it impossible for the witnesses and reporters of them to mistake: they were often done in the presence of malignant, scrutinizing, and intelligent enemies, the Jewish rulers, who acknowledged the facts, but attributed them to an evil, supernatural agency; and there is no interruption in the testimony, from the age in which they were wrought, to this day. It would be trifling with the reader to examine instances so well known in their circumstances, for the slightest recollection of the feeding of the multitudes in the desert;—the healing of the paralytic, who, because of the *multitude*, was let down from the house top;—the instant cure of the withered hand in the synagogue, near Jerusalem, where the Pharisees were "watching our Lord whether

he would heal on the Sabbath day;"—the raising from the dead of the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, and Lazarus; and many other instances of miraculous power,—will be sufficient to convince any ingenuous mind, that all the characters of real and adequately attested miracles meet in them. That great miracle, the resurrection of our Lord himself from the dead, so often appealed to by the first teachers of his religion, may, however, be here properly adduced, with its convincing and irrefragable circumstances, as completing this branch of the external evidence.

That it is a miracle in its highest sense for a person actually dead to raise himself again to life, cannot be doubted; and when wrought, as the raising of Christ was, in attestation of a Divine commission, it is evidence of the most irrefragable kind. So it has been regarded by unbelievers, who have bent all their force against it; and so it was regarded by Divine Providence, who rendered its proofs ample and indubitable in proportion to its importance. Let us, then, examine the circumstances as recorded in the history.

In the first place, *the reality of Christ's death* is circumstantially and fully stated, though if no circumstantial evidence had been adduced, it is not to be supposed that they, who had sought his death with so much eagerness, would be inattentive to the full execution of the sentence for which they had clamoured. The execution was public; he was crucified with common malefactors, in the usual place of execution; the soldiers brake not his legs, the usual practice when they would hasten the death of the malefactor, observing that he was dead already. His enemies knew that he had predicted his resurrection, and would therefore be careful that he should not be removed from the cross before death had actually taken place; and Pilate refused to deliver the body for burial until he had expressly inquired of the officer on duty, whether he were already dead. Nor was he taken away to an unknown or distant tomb. Joseph of Arimathea made no secret of the place where he had buried him. It was in his own family tomb, and the Pharisees knew where to direct the watch which was appointed to guard the body against the approach of his disciples. The reality of the death of Christ is therefore established.

2. But by both parties, by the Pharisees on the one part, and by the disciples on the other, it was agreed, *that the body was missing*, and that, in the state of death, it was never more seen! The sepulchre was made sure, the stone at the mouth being sealed, and a watch of sixty Roman soldiers appointed to guard it, and yet the body was not to be found. Let us see, then, how each party accounts for this fact. The disciples affirm, that two of their company, going early in the morning to the sepulchre to embalm the body, saw an angel descend and roll away the stone, sit upon it, and invite them to see the place where their Lord had

lain, informing them that he was risen, and commanding them to tell the other disciples of the fact;—that others went to the sepulchre, and found not the body, though the grave clothes remained; that, at different times, he appeared to them, both separately and when assembled; that they conversed with him; that he partook of their food; that they touched his body; that he continued to make his appearance among them for nearly six weeks, and then, after many advices, finally led them out as far as Bethany, and, in the presence of them all, ascended into the clouds of heaven. This is the statement of the disciples.

The manner in which the Jewish sanhedrim accounts for the absence of our Lord's body from the sepulchre is, that the Roman soldiers having slept on their posts, the disciples stole away the corpse. We know of no other account. Neither in their earliest books nor traditions is there any other attempt to explain the alleged resurrection of Jesus. We are warranted therefore in concluding, that the Pharisees had nothing but this to oppose to the positive testimony of the disciples, who also added, and published it to the world, that the Roman soldiers related to the Pharisees "all the things that were done," the earthquake, the appearance of the angel, &c; but that they were bribed to say, "*His disciples came by night and stole him away, while we slept.*"

On the statement of the Pharisees we may remark, that though those who were not convinced by our Lord's former miracles were in a state of mind to resist the impression of his resurrection, yet, in this attempt to destroy the testimony of the apostles, they fell below their usual subtlety in circulating a story which carried with it its own refutation. This, however, may be accounted for, from the hurry and agitation of the moment, and the necessity under which they were laid to invent *something* to amuse the populace, who were not indisposed to charge them with the death of Jesus. Of this it is clear that the Pharisees were apprehensive, "*fearing the people*," on this as on former occasions. This appears from the manner in which the sanhedrim addressed the apostles, Acts v, 28: "Did we not straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name? and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and INTEND TO BRING THIS MAN'S BLOOD UPON US." The majority of the people were not enemies of Jesus, though the Pharisees were; and it was a mob of base fellows, and strangers, of which Jerusalem was full at the passover, who had been excited to clamour for his death. The body of the Jewish populace heard him gladly; great numbers of them had been deeply impressed by the raising of Lazarus, in the very neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and had in consequence accompanied him with public acclamations, as the Messiah, into Jerusalem. These sentiments of the people of Jerusalem toward our Lord were transferred to the apostles; for after Peter and John had healed the man at the gate of the temple, and refused to obey the council in keeping silen

as to Christ, when the chief priests had "*farther threatened them, they let them go, finding not how they might punish them* BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE."

It was in a state of considerable agitation, therefore, that this absurd and self-exposed rumour was hastily got up, and as hastily published. We may add, also, that it was hastily abandoned; for it is remarkable, that it is never adverted to by the Pharisees in any of those legal processes instituted at Jerusalem against the first preachers of Christ as the risen Messiah, within a few days after the alleged event itself. First, Peter and John are brought before their great council; then the whole body of the apostles twice; on all these occasions they affirm the fact of the resurrection, before the very men who had originated the tale of the stealing away of the body, and in none of these instances did the chief priests oppose this story to the explicit testimony of his disciples having seen, felt, and conversed with Jesus, after his passion. This silence cannot be accounted for but on the supposition that, in the presence of the apostles at least, they would not hazard its exposure. If at any time the Roman guards could have been brought forward effectually to confront the apostles, it was when the whole body of the latter were in custody, and before the council, where indeed the great question at issue between the parties was, whether Jesus were risen from the dead or not. On the one part, the apostles stand before the rulers affirming the fact, and are ready to go into the detail of their testimony: the only testimony which could be opposed to this is that of the Roman soldiers, but not one of the sixty is brought up, and they do not even advert to the rumour which the rulers had proclaimed. On the contrary, one of them, Gamaliel, advises the council to take no farther proceedings, but to let the matter go on, for this reason, that if it were of men it would come to nought, but if of God, they could not overthrow it, and would be found to fight against God himself. Now it is plain that if the Pharisees themselves believed in the story they had put into the mouths of the Roman soldiers, no doctor of the law, like Gamaliel, would have given such advice, and equally impossible is it that the council should unanimously have agreed to it. With honest proofs of an imposture in their hands, they could never thus have tamely surrendered the public to delusion and their own characters to infamy; nor, if they had, could they have put their non-interference on the ground assumed by Gamaliel The very principle of his decision supposes, that both sides acknowledged something very extraordinary which might prove a work of God; and that time would make it manifest. It admitted in point of fact, that JESUS MIGHT BE RISEN AGAIN. The whole council, by adopting Gamaliel's decision, admitted this possibility, or how could time show the whole work, built entirely upon this fact, to be a work of God, or not? And thus Gamaliel, without intending it, certainly, has afforded

evidence in favour of the resurrection of our Lord the more powerful from its being incidental.

The absurdity involved in the only testimony ever brought against the resurrection of our Lord, rendered it indeed impossible to maintain the story. That a Roman guard should be found off their watch, or asleep, a fault which the military law of that people punished with death, was most incredible; that, if they were asleep, the timid disciples of Christ should dare to make the attempt, when the noise of removing the stone and bearing away the body might awaken them, is very improbable; and, above all, as it has been often put, either the soldiers were awake or asleep—if awake, why did they suffer a few unarmed peasants and women to take away the body? and if asleep, how came they to know that the disciples were the persons?

Against the resurrection of Christ, we may then with confidence say, there is no testimony whatever; it stands, like every other fact in the evangelic history, entirely uncontradicted from the earliest ages to the present; and though we grant that it does not follow, that, because we do not admit the account given of the absence of our Lord's body from the sepulchre by the Jews, we must therefore admit that of the apostles, yet the very inability of those who first objected to the fact of the resurrection to account for the absence of the body, which had been entirely in their own power, affords very strong presumptive evidence in favour of the statement of the disciples. Under such circumstances the loss of the body became itself an extraordinary event. The tomb was carefully closed and sealed by officers appointed for that purpose, a guard was set, and yet the body is missing. The story of the Pharisees does not at all account for the fact; it is too absurd to be for a moment credited; and unless the history of the evangelists be admitted, that singular fact remains still unaccounted for.

But in addition to this presumption, let the circumstances of credibility in the testimony of the disciples be collected, and the evidence becomes indubitable.

The account given by the disciples was not even an *improbable* one, for allow the miracles wrought by Christ during his life, and the resurrection follows as a *natural* conclusion; for before that event can be maintained to be in the lowest sense improbable, the whole history of his public life, in opposition not to the evangelists merely, but, as we have seen, to the testimony of Jews and heathens themselves, must be proved to be a fable.

The *manner* in which this testimony is given, is in its favour. So far from the evangelists having written in concert, they give an account of the transaction so varied as to make it clear that they wrote independently of each other; and yet so agreeing in the leading facts, and so easily capable of reconcilement in those minute circumstances in which

some discrepancy at first sight appears, that their evidence in every part carries with it the air of honesty and truth.

Their own account sufficiently proves, that they were *incredulous* as to the fact when announced, and so not disposed to be imposed upon by an imagination. This indeed was impossible; the appearances of Christ were too numerous, and were continued for too long a time,—forty days. They could not mistake, and it is as *impossible* that they should deceive; *impossible* that upward of five hundred persons to whom Christ appeared, should have been persuaded by the artful few, that they had seen and conversed with Christ, or to agree, not only without reward, but in renunciation of all interests and in hazard of all dangers and of death itself, to continue to assert a falsehood.

Nor did a long period elapse before the fact of the resurrection was proclaimed; nor was a distant place chosen in which to make the first report of it. These would have been suspicious circumstances; but on the contrary the disciples testify the fact from the day of the resurrection itself. One of them in a public speech at the feast of pentecost, addressed to a mixed multitude, affirms it; and the same testimony is given by the whole college of apostles, before the great council twice: this too was done at Jerusalem, the scene of the whole transaction, and in the presence of those most interested in detecting the falsehood. Their evidence was given, not only before private but public persons, before magistrates and tribunals, "before philosophers and rabbies, before courtiers, before lawyers, before people expert in examining and cross-examining witnesses," and yet what Christian ever impeached his accomplices? or discovered this pretended imposture? or was convicted of prevarication? or was even confronted with others who could contradict him as to this or any other matter of fact relative to his religion? To this testimony of the apostles was added the seal of miracles, wrought as publicly, and being as unequivocal in their nature, as open to public investigation, and as numerous, as those of their Lord himself. The miracle of the gift of tongues was in proof of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; and the miracles of healing were wrought by the apostles in their Master's *name*, and therefore were the proofs both of his resurrection and of their commission. Indeed, of the want of supernatural evidence the Jews, the ancient enemies of Christianity never complained. They allowed the miracles both of Christ and his apostles; but by ascribing them to Satan, and regarding them as diabolical delusions and wonders wrought in order to seduce them from the law, their admissions are at once in proof of the truth of the Gospel history, and enable us to account for their resistance to an evidence so majestic and overwhelming. (6)

(6) The evidences of our Lord's resurrection are fully exhibited in West on

CHAPTER XVI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE PROOF FROM MIRACLES CONSIDERED.

THE first objection to the conclusiveness of the argument in favour of the Mosaic and Christian systems which is drawn from their miracles is grounded upon facts and doctrines supposed to be found in the Scriptures themselves.

It is stated, that the Scriptures assert miraculous acts to have been performed in opposition to the mission and to the doctrine of those who have professed themselves accredited instruments of making known revelations of the will of God to mankind; and that the sacred writers frequently speak of such events as possible, nay as certain future occurrences, even when they have not actually taken place. The question therefore is, how miracles should be conclusive proofs of *truth*, when they actually have been, or may be wrought, in proof of *falsehood*. 'Shall a miracle confirm the belief of one, and not confirm the belief of more Gods than one, if wrought for that purpose?" (*Bishop* FLEETWOOD *on Miracles.*) The *instances* usually adduced are the feats of the Egyptian magi in opposition to Moses, and the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor. The presumptions that such works are considered possible, are drawn from a passage of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy; a prediction respecting false Christs in St. Matthew's Gospel; and the prediction of the man of sin, in the writings of St. Paul: all of which caution the reader against being seduced from the truth, by "signs and wonders" performed by false teachers.

With respect to the miracles, or pretended miracles, wrought by the magicians of Pharaoh, some preliminary considerations are to be noted.

1. That whether the persons called magicians were regular priests or a distinct class of men, they were known to be expert in producing singular effects and apparent transformations in natural objects, for after Moses had commenced his marvellous operations, they were sent for by Pharaoh to oppose their power and skill to his.

2. That they succeeded, or appeared to succeed, in three attempts to imitate the works of Moses, and were then controlled, or attempted a work beyond their power, and were obliged to acknowledge themselves vanquished by "the finger of God." The rest of the miracles wrought by Moses went on without any attempt at imitation.

3. That these works of whatever kind they might be, were wrought to hold up the idols of Egypt as equal in power to Jehovah, the God of Moses and the Israelites. This is a consideration of importance, and

the Resurrection, SHERLOCK'S Trial of the Witnesses, and Dr. COOK'S Illustrations of the Evidence of Christ's Resurrection.

the fact is easily proved. If they were mere jugglers and performed their wonders by sleight of hand, they did not wish the people to know this, or their influence over them could not have been maintained. They therefore used "enchantments," incongruous and strange ceremonies, rites and offerings, which among all superstitious people have been supposed to have a powerful effect in commanding the influence of supernatural beings in their favour and subjecting them to their will. We have an instance of this use of "*enchantments*" in the case of Balaam, who lived in the same age; and this example goes very far, we think, to settle the sense in which the magi used "*enchantments*;" for though the original word used is different, yet its ideal meaning is equally capable of being applied to the rites of incantation, and in this sense it is confirmed by the whole story. (7) Whatever connection therefore may be supposed to exist between the "enchantments" used and the works performed, or if all connection be denied, this species of religious rite was performed, and the people understood, as it was intended they should understand, that the wonders which the magi performed were done under the influence of their deities. The object of Pharaoh and the magicians was to show, that their gods were as powerful as the God who had commissioned Moses, and that they could protect them from his displeasure, though they should refuse at the command of his commissioned servant to let his people go.

But whatever pretence there was of supernatural assistance, it is contended by several writers of great and deserved authority, that no miracles were wrought at all on these occasions; that, by dexterity and previous preparation, serpents were substituted by the magicians for rods; that a colouring matter was infused into a portion of water; and that as frogs, through the previous miracle of Moses, every where abounded in the land of Egypt, a sufficient number might be easily procured to cover some given space; and they farther argue, that when the miracles of Moses became such as to defy the possibility of the most distant imitation, at that point the simulations of the magi ceased.

The obvious objection to this is, that "Moses describes the works of the magicians in the very same language as he does his own, and therefore there is reason to conclude that they were equally miraculous."

(7) "*They also did in like manner with their enchantments.* The word לָטִים, *lahatim*, comes from לט, *lahat*, to *burn*, to *set on fire*; and probably signifies such incantations as required *lustral fires*, *sacrifices*, *fumigations*, *burning of incense*, *aromatic*, and *odoriferous drugs*, &c, as the means of evoking departed spirits, or assistant demons, by whose ministry, it is probable, the magicians in question wrought some of their deceptive miracles: for as the term *miracle* properly signifies something which exceeds the power of nature or art to produce, (see verse 9;) hence there could be no miracle in this case, but those wrought through the power of God, by the ministry of Moses and Aaron." (Dr. ADAM CLARKE *in loc.*)

To this it is replied, that nothing is more common than to speak of professed jugglers as *doing* what they pretend or appear to do, and that this language never misleads. But it is also stated, and the observation is of great weight, that the word used by Moses is one of great latitude —"*they* DID so," that is, in like manner, importing that they *attempted* some imitation of Moses; because it is used when they *failed* in their attempt—"*they* DID so *to bring forth lice; but they could not.*" Farther, Mr. Farmer, Dr. Hales, and others, contend, that the root of the word translated "enchantments" fitly expresses any "secret artifices or methods of deception, whereby false appearances are imposed upon the spectators." For a farther explanation and defence of this hypothesis, an extract from Farmer's Dissertation on Miracles is given, at the end of the chapter. (8)

Much as these observations deserve attention, it may be very much doubted, whether mere manual dexterity and sleight of hand can sufficiently account for the effects actually produced, if only human agents were engaged; and it does not appear impracticable to meet any difficulty which may arise out of an admission of *supernatural evil* agency in the imitation of the three first wonders performed by Moses.

It ought however in the first place to be previously stated, that the history before us is not in fairness to be judged of as an insulated statement, independent of the principles and doctrines of the revelation in which it is found. With that revelation it is bound up, and by the light of its doctrine it is to be judged. No infidel, who would find in Scripture an argument against Scripture, has the right to consider any passage separately, or to apply to it the rule of his own theory on religious subjects, unless he has first, by fair and honest argument, disposed of the evidences of the Scriptures themselves. He must disprove the authenticity of the sacred record, and the truth of the facts contained in it,—he must rid himself of every proof of the Divine mission of Moses, and of the evidence of his miracles, before he is entitled to this right; and if he is inadequate to this task, he can only consider the case as a *difficulty*, standing on the admission of the Scriptures themselves, and to be explained, as far as possible, on the principles of that general system of religion which the Scriptures themselves supply. In this nothing more is asked, than argumentative fairness. The same rule is still more obligatory upon those interpreters who profess to believe in the Divine authority of the sacred records; for by the aid of their general principles and unequivocal doctrines, every difficulty which they profess to extract from them, is surely to be examined in order to ascertain its real character. What, however, is the real difficulty in the present case, supposing it to be allowed that the magicians performed works superior to the power of any mere human agent, and therefore supernatural?

(8) See note A at the end of the chapter.

This it is the more necessary to settle, as the difficulty supposed to arise out of this admission has been exaggerated.

It seems generally to have been supposed, that these counter performances were wrought to contradict the Divine mission of Moses, and that by allowing them to be supernatural, we are brought into the difficulty of supposing, that God may authenticate the mission of his servants by miracles, and that miracles may be wrought also to contradict this attestation, thus leaving us in a state of uncertainty. This view is not however at all countenanced by the history. No intimation is given that the magicians performed their wonders to prove that there was no such God as Jehovah, or that Moses was not commissioned by him. For as they did not deny the works of Moses to be really performed, they could no more deny that he did them by the power of his God, than they would deny that they themselves performed their exploits by the assistance of their gods,—a point which they doubtless wished to impress upon Pharaoh and the people, and for which both were prepared by their previous belief in their idols, and in the effect of incantations. For to suppose that Pharaoh sent for men to play mere juggling tricks, *knowing* them to be mere jugglers, seems too absurd to be for a moment admitted, except indeed, as some have assumed, that he thought the works of Moses to be sleight-of-hand deceptions, which he might expose by the imitations of his own jugglers. But nothing of this is even hinted at in the history, and at least the second work of Moses was such as entirely to preclude the idea—the water became blood *throughout the whole land of Egypt*. It was not intended by these works of the Egyptian magi, to oppose the existence of Jehovah, for there was nothing in polytheism which required it to be denied, that every people had their own local divinities,—nothing indeed which required its votaries to disallow the existence of even a Supreme Deity, the "Father of gods and men;" and that Moses was commissioned by this Jehovah, "the God of the Hebrews," to command Pharaoh to let *his* people go, was in point of fact acknowledged, rather than denied, by allowing his works, and attempting to imitate them. The argument upon their own principles was certainly as strong for Moses, as for the Egyptian priests. If their extraordinary works proved them the servants of their gods, the works of Moses proved him to be the servant of his God.

Thus in this series of singular transactions was there no evidence from counter miracles, even should it be allowed that real miracles were wrought, to counteract or nullify the mission of Moses, or to deny the existence or even to question any of the attributes of the true Jehovah. All that can be said is, that singular works, which were intended to pass for miraculous ones, were wrought, not to disprove any thing which Moses advanced, but to prove that the Egyptian deities had power equal to the God of the Jews; and in which contest their votaries

ultimately failed—that pretension being abundantly refuted by the transcendent nature and number of the works of Moses; and by their being "*plagues*," from which the objects of their idolatry could not deliver them, and which, indeed, as the learned Bryant has shown, were intended expressly to humble idolatry itself, and put it to open and bitter shame.

If in this instance we see nothing to contravene the evidence of miracles, as attestations of the Divine commission of Moses, so in no other case recorded in Scripture. The raising of the spirit of Samuel by the witch of Endor, is indeed the only instance of any thing approaching to miraculous agency ascribed to an evil spirit, unless we add the power exercised by Satan over Job, and his bearing our Lord through the air, and placing him upon an exceeding high mountain. But whether these events were properly speaking miraculous, may be more than doubted; and if they were, neither they, nor the raising of Samuel profess to give any evidence in opposition to the mission of any servant of God, or to the doctrines taught by him. On the contrary, so far are the Scriptures from affording any examples of miracles, either real or simulated, wrought in direct opposition to the mission and theological doctrine of the inspired messengers of God in any age, that in cases where the *authority* of the messenger was fairly brought into question, the examples are of a quite different kind. Elijah brought the matter to issue, whether Jehovah *or* Baal were God; and while the priests of Baal heard neither "*voice nor sound*" in return to all their prayers, the God of Israel answered his own prophet by fire, and by that ratified his servant's commission and his own Divinity before all Israel. The devils in our Lord's days *confessed* him to be the Son of the most high God. The damsel possessed with a spirit of divination at Thyatira, gave testimony to the mission of the Apostle Paul and his companions. We read of no particular acts performed by Elymas the sorcerer; but, whatever he could perform, when he attempted to turn away Sergius Paulus from the faith he was struck blind. And thus we find that Scripture does no where represent miracles to have been actually wrought in contradiction of the authority of any whom God had commissioned to teach his will to mankind.

But that the Scriptures assume this as *possible*, is argued from Deut. xiii. 1. &c.—where the people are commanded not to follow a prophet or dreamer of dreams, who would entice them into idolatry, though he should give them "a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass." Here, however, it appears, that not a miracle, but a prophecy of some wonderful event is spoken of: for this sign or wonder was to come to pass. Nor can the prediction be considered as more than some shrewd and accidental guess, either from himself, or by the assistance of some evil supernatural agency, (a subject we shall just now

consider,) but in fact, falling short, though in some respects wonderful, of a true prediction; because in the eighteenth chapter of this same book, the fulfilment of the words of a prophet is made the *conclusive proof* of his Divine commission, nor can we suppose the same writer within the distance of a few sentences to contradict himself.

In Matthew xxiv, 24, it is predicted that false Christs and false prophets shall arise and show "*great signs and wonders*," calculated to deceive men, though not "*the elect*." And in 2 Thess. ii, 8 and 9, the coming of the man of sin is said to be "*after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders*." The *latter* prediction refers unquestionably to the papacy, and to works wrought to lead men from the true *interpretation* of the Gospel, though not to annul in the least the Divine authority of Christ and his apostles; the *former* supposes works which, as being wrought by false Christs, are opposed to the commission of our Lord, and is indeed the only instance in which a *direct* contest between the miracles which attest the authority of a Divine messenger, and "*great signs and wonders*" wrought to attest an opposing and contradictory authority, is spoken of. What these "*signs and wonders*' may be, it is therefore necessary to ascertain.

In the Thessalonians they are ascribed to the "*working of Satan*," and in order to bring the general principles of the revelation of the Scriptures to bear upon these, its more obscure and difficult parts, a rule to which we are in fairness bound, it must be observed,

1. That the introduction of sin into the world is ascribed to the malice and seductive cunning of a powerful evil spirit, the head and leader of innumerable others. 2. That when a Redeemer was promised to man, that promise, in its very first annunciation, indicated a long and arduous struggle between HIM and these evil supernatural agents. 3. That it is the fact, that a powerful contest has been maintained in the world ever since, between truth and error, idolatry, superstition, and will worship, and the pure and authorized worship of the true God. 4. That the Scriptures uniformly represent the Redeemer and Restorer at the head of one party of men in the struggle, and Satan at the head of the other; each making use of men as their instruments, though consistently with their *general* free agency. 5 That almighty God carries on his purposes to win man back to obedience to him, by the exhibition of truth, with its proper evidences; by commands, promises, threats, chastisements, and final punishments, and that Satan opposes this design by exhibitions of error, and false religion, gratifying to the corrupt passions and appetites of men; and especially seeks to influence powerful agents among men to seduce others by their example; and to destroy the truth by persecution and force. 6 That the false religions of the heathen, as well as the corruptions of Christianity, took place under this diabolical influence; and

that the idols of the heathen were not only the devices of devils, but often devils themselves, (9) made the objects of the worship of men, either for their wickedness or their supposed power to hurt. (1)

Now as the objection which we are considering is professedly taken from Scripture, its doctrine on this subject must be explained by itself, and for this reason the above particulars have been introduced; but the inquiry must go farther. These evil spirits are in a state of hostility to the truth, and oppose it by endeavouring to seduce men to erroneous opinions, and a corrupt worship. All their power may therefore be expected to be put forth in accomplishment of their designs; but to what does their power extend? This is an important question, and the Scriptures afford us no small degree of assistance in deciding it.

1. They can perform no work of *creation*; for this throughout Scripture is constantly attributed to God, and is appealed to by him as the proof of his own Divinity in opposition to idols, and to all beings whatever—"*To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One? Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.*" This claim must of necessity cut off from every other being the power of creating in any degree, that is, of making any thing out of nothing; for a being possessing the power to create an atom out of nothing, could not want the ability of making a world. Nay, creation, in its lower sense, is in this passage denied to any but God; that is, the forming goodly and perfect natural objects, such as the heavens and the earth are replenished with, from a pre-existent matter, as he formed all things from matter unorganized and chaotic. No "*sign*," therefore, no "*wonder*" which implies creation, is possible to finite beings; and whatever power any of them may have over matter, it cannot extend to any act of creation.

2. Life and death are out of the power of evil spirits. The dominion of these is so exclusively claimed by God himself in many passages of Scripture which are familiar, that they need not be cited,—"*Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death*"—"*I kill, and I make alive again.*" No "signs or wonders," therefore, which imply dominion

(9) Some of the *demons* worshipped by heathens had a benevolent reputation, and these were no doubt suggested by the tradition of good angels; others were malignant, and were none other than the evil angels, devils, handed down by the same tradition. Thus Plutarch says, "It has been a very ancient opinion, that there are malevolent demons, who envy good men, and oppose them in their actions," &c.

(1) The *passion* of Satan to be worshipped appears strongly marked in our Lord's temptation: "All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." In all ages evil and sanguinary beings have been deified. It was so in the time of Moses, and remains so to this day in India and Africa, where devil worship is openly professed. In Ceylon nothing is more common; and in many parts of Africa every village has its devil house.

over these,—the power to produce a living being, or to give life to the dead,—are within the power of evil spirits; these are works of God.

3. The knowledge of future events, especially of those which depend on free or contingent causes, is not attainable by evil spirits. This is the property of God, who founds upon it the proof of his Deity, and therefore excludes it from all others: "*Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods*," Isa. xl, 25, 26; xli, 23. They cannot therefore utter a prediction in the strict and proper sense; though from their great knowledge of human affairs, and their long habits of observation, their conjectures may be surprising, and often accomplished, and so if uttered by any of their servants may have in some cases the appearance of prophecies.

4. They do not know certainly the thoughts and characters of men. "That," as St. Augustine observes, "they have a great facility in discovering what is in the minds of men by the least external sign they give of it, and such as the most sagacious men cannot perceive," and that they may have other means of access too to the mind beside these external signs; and that a constant observation of human character, to which they are led by their favourite work of temptation, gives them great insight into the character and tempers and weakness of individuals, may be granted; but that the absolute, immediate, infallible knowledge of the thoughts and character belongs alone to God, is clearly the doctrine of Scripture: it is the Lord "*who searcheth the heart*," and "*knoweth what is in man*;" and in Jeremiah vii, 9, 10, the knowledge of the heart is attributed exclusively to God alone.

Let all these things then be considered, and we shall be able to ascertain, at least in part, the limits within which this evil agency is able to operate in opposing the truth, and in giving currency to falsehood; at least we shall be able to show, that the Scriptures assign no power to this "*working of Satan*" to oppose the truth by such "*signs and wonders*" as many have supposed. In no instance can evil spirits oppose the truth, we do not say by equal, or nearly equal miracles and prophecies, but by *real* ones—of both, their works are but simulations. We take the case of *miracles*. A creature cannot *create*; this is the doctrine of Scripture, and it will serve to explain the wonders of the Egyptian magi. They were, we think, very far above the sleight of hand of *mere men* unassisted; and we have seen, that as idolatry is diabolic, and even is the worship of devils themselves, and the instrument of their opposition to God, the Scriptures suppose them to be exceedingly active in its support. It is perfectly accordant with this principle, therefore, to conclude, that Pharaoh's priests had as much of the assistance of the demons whose ministers they were, as they were able to exert. But then the great principles we have just deduced from Scripture, oblige us to limit this power. It was not a power of working real miracles, but

of simulating them in order to uphold the credit of idolatry. Now the three miracles of Moses which were simulated, all involved a creating energy. A serpent was created out of the matter of the rod; the frogs, from their immense multitude, appear also to have been created; and blood was formed out of the matter of water. But in the imitations of the magi, there was no creation: we are forbidden by the doctrine of Scripture to allow this, and therefore there must have been deception and the substitution of one thing for another; which, though performed in a manner apparently much above human adroitness, might be very much within the power of a number of invisible and active spirits. Serpents, in a country where they abound, might be substituted for rods; frogs, which, after they had been brought upon the land by Moses, were numerous enough, might be suddenly thrown upon a cleared place; and the water, which could only be obtained by digging, for the plague of Moses was upon all the streams and reservoirs, and the quantity being in consequence very limited, might by their invisible activity be easily mixed with blood or a colouring matter. In all this there was something of the imposture of the priests, and much of the assistance of Satan; but in the strict sense no miracle was wrought by either, while the works of Moses were, from their extent, unequivocally miraculous.

For the reasons we have given, no apparent miracles wrought in support of falsehood, can for a moment become rivals of the great miracles by which the revelations of the Scripture are attested. For instance, nothing like that of feeding several thousands of people with a few loaves and fishes can occur, for that supposes creation of the matter and the form of bread and fish; no giving life to the dead, for the "issues from death" belong exclusively to God. Accordingly we find in the "*signs and wonders*" wrought by the false prophets and Christs predicted in Matthew, whether we suppose them mere impostors, or the immediate agents of Satan also, nothing of this decisive kind to attest their mission. THEUDAS promised to divide Jordan, and seduced many to follow him; but he was killed by the Roman troops before he could perform his miracle. Another promised that the walls of Jerusalem should fall down; but his followers were also put to the sword by Felix. The false Christ, BARCHOCHEBA, raised a large party; but no miracles of his are recorded. Another arose, A. D. 434, and pretended to divide the sea; but hid himself after many of his besotted followers had plunged into it, in faith that it would retire from them, and were drowned. Many other false Christs appeared at different times; but the most noted was SABBATAI SEVI, in 1666. The delusion of the Jews with respect to him was very great. Many of his followers were strangely affected, prophesied of his greatness, and appeared by their contortions to be under some supernatural influence; but the grand seignior having apprehended Sabbatai, gave him the choice of proving his Messiahship,

by suffering a body of archers to shoot at him; after which, if he was not wounded, he would acknowledge him to be the Messias; or, if he declined this, that he should be impaled, or turn Turk. He chose the latter, and the delusion was dissipated.

Now whatever "*signs or wonders*" may be wrought by any of these, it is clear from the absence of all record of any unequivocal miracle, that they were either illusions or impostures.

The same course of remark applies to *prophecy*. To know the future certainly, is the special prerogative of God. The false prophet anticipated by Moses in Deuteronomy, who was to utter wonderful predictions which should "*come to pass*," is not therefore to be supposed to utter predictions strictly and truly, as founded upon an absolute knowledge of the future. A shrewd man may guess happily in some instances, and his conjectures when accomplished may appear to be "*a sign and a wonder*," to a people willing to be deceived, because loving the idolatry to which he would lead them. Still farther, the Scripture doctrine does not discountenance the idea of an evil supernatural agency "*working*" with him; and then the superior sagacity of evil spirits may give to his conjectures, founded upon their own natural foresight of probabilities, a more decided air of prophecy, and thus aid the wicked purpose of seducing men from God's worship. Real and unequivocal prophecy is however impossible to them, and indeed we have no instance of any approach to it among the false prophets recorded in the Jewish history. The heathen oracles may afford us also a comment on this. They were exceedingly numerous; many of them were highly celebrated; all professed to reveal the future; some wonderful stories are recorded of them; and it is difficult to refer the whole to the imposture of priests, though much of that was ultimately detected. That they kept their credit for two thousand years, and were silenced by the spread of the Gospel, and that, almost entirely, before the time of the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, as acknowledged by heathen authors themselves—that they were in many instances silenced by individual Christians, is openly declared in the apologies of the Christian fathers, so that the *Pythonic* inspiration could never be renewed—these are all strong presumptions at least, that, in this mockery of the Oracle of Zion, this counterfeit of the standing evidence given by prophecy to truth, there was much of diabolical agency, though greatly mingled with imposture. (2) Nevertheless, the ambiguity and obscurity by which the oracles sported with the credulity of the heathen, and miserably seduced them, often to the most diabolical wickednesses, and yet, in many cases, whatever might happen, preserved the appearance

(2) This subject is acutely and learnedly discussed in "An Answer to M. de Fontenelle's History of Oracles, translated from the French by a Priest of the Church of England."

of having told the truth, sufficiently proved the want of a certain and clear knowledge of the future; and, upon the showing of their own writers, nothing was ever uttered by an oracle which, considered as prophecy, can be for a moment put in comparison with the least remarkable of those Scripture predictions which are brought forward in proof of the truth of the Scriptures. When they are brought into comparison, the most celebrated of them appear contemptible. (3) We may then very confidently conclude, that as Scripture no where represents any "*signs or wonders*" as *actually* wrought to contradict the evidence of the Divine commission of Moses, of Christ and his apostles; so in those passages in which it supposes that they may occur, and predicts that they will be wrought in favour of falsehood, and, in the case of the false Christs, in opposition to the true Messiah, they do not give any countenance to the notion, that either real miracles can be wrought, or real predictions uttered, even by the permission of God, in favour of falsehood: for no permission, properly speaking, can be given to any being to do what he has not the natural power to effect; and permission in this case, to mean any thing, must imply that God himself wrought the miracles, and gave the predictions, through the instrumentality of a creature it is true, but in fact that he employed his Divine power in opposition to his own truth,—a dishonourable thought which cannot certainly be maintained. His permission may however extend to a license to evil men, and evil spirits too, to employ, against the truth and for the seduction of men, whatever *natural* power they possess. This is perfectly consistent with the general doctrine of Scripture; but this permission is granted under rule and limit. Thus the history of Job is highly important, as it shows that evil spirits cannot employ their power against a good man without *express permission*. An event in the history of Jesus teaches also that they cannot destroy even an *animal* of the vilest kind, a *swine*, without the same license. *Moral ends* too were to be answered in both cases—teaching the doctrine of Providence to future generations by the example of Job; and punishing the Gadarenes in their property for their violation of the law through covetousness. So entirely are these invisible opposers of the truth and plans of Christ under control; and as moral ends are so explicitly marked in these instances, they may be inferred as to every other, where permission to work evil or injury is granted. In the cases indeed before us, such moral purposes do not entirely rest upon inference; but are made evident from the history. The agency of Satan was permitted in support of idolatry in Egypt, only to make the triumph of the true God over idols more illustrious, and to justify his severe judgments upon the Egyptians. The false prophets anticipated in Deuteronomy were per-

(3) See note B at the end of the chapter.

mitted, as it is stated, in order "*to prove the people.*" A new circumstance of trial was introduced, which would lead them to compare the pretended predictions of the false prophet with the illustrious and well-sustained series of splendid miracles by which the Jewish economy had been established,—a comparison which could not fail to confirm rational and virtuous men in the truth, and to render more inexcusable those light and vain persons who might be seduced. This observation may also be applied to the case of the false Christs. In certain of these cases there is also something *judicial.* When men have yielded themselves so far to vice, as to seek error as its excuse, it seems a principle of the Divine government to make their sin their punishment. The Egyptians were besotted with their idolatries; they had rejected the clearest evidences of the truth, and were left to the delusions of the demons they worshipped. The Israelites, in those parts of their history to which Moses refers, were passionately inclined to idolatry; they wished any pretence or sanction for it, and were ready to follow every seducer. What they sought, they found,—occasions of going astray, which would have had no effect upon them had their hearts been right with God. The Jews rejected a spiritual Messiah, with all the evidences of his mission; but were ready to follow any impostor who promised them victory and dominion; they were disposed therefore to listen to every pretence, and to become the dupes of every illusion. But in no instance was the temptation either *irresistible*, or even *strong*, except as it was made so by their own violent inclinations to evil, and proneness to find pretences for it. In all the cases here supposed, the temptation to error was never present *but in circumstances in which it was confronted with the infinitely higher evidence of truth*, and that not merely in the number or greatness of the miracles and predictions, but in the very nature of the "*signs*" themselves,—one being unquestionably *miraculous*, the other being at best *strange* and *surprising*, without a decided miraculous or prophetic character. The sudden and unperceived substitution of serpents for the rods of the magicians, might, if the matter had ended there, have neutralized the effect of the real transformation of Aaron's rod; but then the serpent of Moses swallowed up the others. When frogs were already over all the land of Egypt, the imitation must have been confined to some spot purposely freed from them, and for that reason did not bear an unequivocal character; nor could the turning of water from a well into blood, (no difficult matter to pretend,) rival for an instant the conversion of the waters of the mighty Nile, and the innumerable channels and reservoirs fed by it, into that offensive substance. To these we are to add the miracles which followed, and which obliged even the magicians to confess "the finger of God." To the people whom the false prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy should attempt to lead astray from the LAW, all its mag-

nificent evidences were known, the glory of God was then between the cherubim; the Urim and Thummim gave their responses; and the government was a standing miracle. To those who followed false Christs, the evidences of the mission of Jesus were known; his unequivocal miracles, it is singular, were never denied by those very Jews who, ever looking out for deception, cried as to the expected Christ, "*Lo, he is here, and lo, he is there!*" The "*working of Satan*," and the "*lying wonders*," mentioned in the Thessalonians, were to take place among a people, who not only had the words of Christ and his apostles, but acknowledged too their Divine authority as established by miracles and prophecies, the unequivocal character of which theirs never even pretended to equal. Thus, in none of the instances adduced in the argument, was there any exposure to inevitable error, by any evidence in favour of falsehood; the evidence of the truth was in all these cases *at hand*, and presented itself under an obviously *distinct* and *superior* character. We conclude therefore that the objection to the conclusive nature of the proof of the truth of the Scriptures from miracles and prophecies grounded upon the supposed admission that miracles may be wrought and prophecies uttered in favour of error, is not only without foundation, but that as far as Scriptural evidence goes on this subject, the demonstrative nature of real miracles and prophecies is, by what it really admits as to "*the working of Satan*," abundantly confirmed. It does not admit that real miracles can be wrought, or real prophecies uttered; and it never supposes simulated ones, *when opposed to revealed truth*, but under circumstances in which they can be detected, or which give them an equivocal character, and in which they may be compared with true miracles and predictions, so that none can be deceived by them but those who are violently bent on error and transgression.

Another objection to the conclusiveness of the proof from miracles, is brought from the pretended heathen miracles of Aristeas, Pythagoras, Alexander of Pontus, Vespasian, and Apollonius Tyanæus, and from accounts of miracles in the Romish Church; but as this objection has been very feebly urged by the adversaries of Christianity, as though they themselves were ashamed of the argument, our notice of it shall be brief. For a full consideration of the objection we refer to the authors mentioned below. (4)

With respect to most of these pretended miracles, we may observe, that it was natural to expect that pretences to miraculous powers should be made under every form of religion, since the opinion of the earliest ages was in favour of the occurrence of such events; and as truth had been thus sanctioned, it is not surprising that error should attempt to counterfeit its authority. But they are all deficient in evidence. Many

(4) MACKNIGHT's Truth of the Gospel History; DOUGLAS's Criterion; CAMPBELL on Miracles; and PALEY's Evidences.

of them indeed are absurd, and carry the air of fable; and as to others, it is well observed by Dr. Macknight, (*Truth of the Gospel History,*) that "they are vouched to us by no such testimony as can induce a prudent man to give them credit. They are not reported by any eye witnesses of them, nor by any persons on whom they were wrought These who relate them do not even pretend to have received them from eye witnesses; we know them only by vague reports, the original of which no one can exactly trace. The miracles ascribed to Pythagoras were not reported until several hundred years after his death; and those of Apollonius, one hundred years after his death." Many instances which are given, especially among the papists, may be resolved into *imagination;* others, both popish and pagan, into the artifice of priests who were of the ruling party, and therefore feared no punishment even upon detection; and in almost all cases, we find that they were performed in favour of the *dominant religion*, and before persons whose religious prejudices were to be flattered and strengthened by them, and of course, persons very much disposed to become dupes. Bishop Douglas has laid down the following decisive and clear rules in his "Criterion," for trying miracles. That we may reasonably suspect any accounts of miracles to be false, if they are not published *till long after the time* when they are said to have been performed—or if they were not first published *in the place* where they are said to have been wrought —or if they probably were suffered to pass *without examination*, in the time, and at the place where they took their rise. These are *general* grounds of suspicion, to which may be added particular ones, arising from any circumstances which plainly indicate imposture and artifice on the one hand, or credulity and imagination on the other.

Before such tests, all pagan, popish, and other pretended miracles without exception, shrink: and they are not for a moment to be brought into comparison with works wrought *publicly*—in the sight of *thousands*, and those often opposers of the system to be established by them—works not by any ingenuity whatever to be resolved into artifice on the one part, or into the effects of imagination on the other—works performed before scholars, statesmen, rulers, persecutors; of which the instances are numerous, and the places in which they occurred various —works published at the time, and on the very spot—works not in favour of a ruling system, but directed against every other religious establishment under heaven; and, for giving their testimony to which, the original witnesses had therefore to expect, and did in succession receive, reproach, stripes, imprisonment, and death.

It is also of importance to observe, that whatever those pretended miracles might be, whether false or exaggerated relations, or artful impostures; or even were we to admit some of them to have been occurrences of an extraordinary and inexplicable kind, they are for the most

part, whether pagan or papal, a sort of insulated occurrences, which do not so much as profess to prove any thing of common interest to the world. As they are destitute of convincing marks of credibility, so they have no inherent propriety, nor any perceptible connection with a design of importance to mankind. But "the Scriptures of the Old Testament record a continued succession of wonderful works, connected also in a most remarkable manner with the *system* carried on from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ. The very first promise of a Redeemer, who should bruise the serpent's head, appears to have been accompanied with a signal miracle, by which the nature of the serpent tribe was instantly changed, and reduced to a state of degradation and baseness, expressive of the final overthrow of that evil spirit, through whose deceits man had fallen from his innocence and glory. The mark set upon Cain was probably some miraculous change in his external appearance, transmitted to his posterity, and serving as a memorial of the first apostasy from the true religion. The general deluge was a signal instance of miraculous punishment inflicted upon the whole human race, when they had departed from the living God, and were become utterly irreclaimable. The dispersion of Babel, and the confusion of tongues, indicated the Divine purpose of preventing an intermixture of idolaters and Atheists with the worship of the true God. The wonders wrought in Egypt, by the hand of Moses, were pointedly directed against the senseless and abominable idolatries of that devoted country, and were manifestly designed to expose their absurdity and falsehood, as well as to effect the deliverance of God's people, Israel. The subsequent miracles in the desert, had an evident tendency to wean the Israelites from an attachment to the false deities of the surrounding nations, and to instruct them by figurative representations in that '*better covenant, established upon better promises,*' of which the Mosaic institute was designed to be a shadow and a type. The settlement of the Israelites in Canaan under their leader Joshua, and their continuance in it for a long succession of ages, were accompanied with a series of wonders, all operating to that one purpose of the Almighty, the separation of his people from a wicked and apostate world, and the preservation of a chosen seed, through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Every miracle wrought under the Jewish theocracy, appears to have been intended, either to correct the superstitions and impieties of the neighbouring nations, and to bring them to a conviction that the Lord Jehovah was the true God, and that beside him there was none other; or to reclaim the Jews, whenever they betrayed a disposition to relapse into heathenish abominations, and to forsake that true religion which the Almighty was pledged to uphold throughout all ages, and for the completion of which he was then, in his infinite wisdom, arranging all human events

"In the miracles which our Lord performed, he not only evinced his Divine power, but fulfilled many important prophecies relating to him as the Messiah. Thus they afforded a two-fold evidence of his authority. In several of them we perceive likewise a striking reference to the especial *object* of his mission. Continually did he apply these wonderful *works* to the purpose of inculcating and establishing *doctrines*, no less wonderful and interesting to the sons of men.

"The same may likewise be remarked of the miracles recorded of the apostles, after our Lord's departure from this world, in none of which do we find any thing done for mere ostentation; but an evident attention to the great purpose of the Gospel, that of '*turning men from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*'

"It seems impossible for any thinking man to take such a view as this of the peculiar design and use of the Scripture miracles, and not to perceive in them the unerring counsels of infinite *wisdom*, as well as the undoubted exertions of infinite *power*. When we see the several parts of this stupendous scheme thus harmonizing and co-operating for the attainment of one specific object, of the highest importance to the whole race of mankind; we cannot but be struck with a conviction of the absolute impossibility of imposture or enthusiasm, in any part of the proceeding. We are compelled to acknowledge, that they exhibit proofs of Divine agency, carried on in one continued series, such as no other system hath ever pretended to: such as not only surpasses all human ingenuity, but seems impossible to have been effected by any combination of created beings." (VAN MILDERT'S *Boyle Lectures*.)

On miracles therefore, like those which attest the mission of Moses and of Christ, we may safely rest the proof of the authority of both, and say to each of them, though with a due sense of the superiority of the "SON" to the "SERVANT," "*Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except* GOD *be with him.*"

NOTE A.—Page 158.

In reply to the objection that "Moses describes the works of the magicians in the very same language as he does his own, and therefore that there is reason to conclude that they were equally miraculous," Dr. Farmer remarks,—

"1. That nothing is more common than to speak of professed jugglers, as *doing* what they *pretend* and *appear* to do, and that this language never misleads, when we reflect what sort of men are spoken of, namely, mere impostors on the sight: why might not Moses then use the common popular language when speaking of the magicians, without any danger of misconstruction, inasmuch as the subject he was treating, all the circumstances of the narrative, and the opinion which the historian was known to entertain of the inefficacy and imposture of magic, did all concur to prevent mistakes?

"2. Moses does not affirm that there was a perfect conformity between his works and those of the magicians; he does not close the respective relations of his own particular miracles, with saying the magicians *did that thing*, or *according to what he did*, so *did they*, a form of speech used on this occasion no less than three times in one chapter, to describe the exact correspondence between the orders of God and the behaviour of his servants; but makes choice of a word of great latitude, such as does not necessarily express any thing more than a general similitude, such as is consistent with a difference in many important respects, they did *so* or *in like manner* as he had.—That a perfect imitation could not be designed by this word, is evident from its being applied to cases in which such an imitation was absolutely impracticable: for, when Aaron had converted *all* the waters of Egypt into *blood*, we are told the magicians *did so*, that is, something in like *sort*. Nor can it be supposed that they *covered* the land of Egypt with frogs, this had been done already; they could only appear to bring them over some small space cleared for the purpose. But what is more decisive, the word imports nothing more than their *attempting* some imitation of Moses, for it is used when they failed in their attempt: *They did* so *to bring forth lice, but they could not.*

"3. So far is Moses from ascribing the tricks of the magicians to the invocation and power of demons, or to any superior beings whatever, that he does most expressly refer all they did or attempted in imitation of himself to *human artifice and imposture*. The original words, which are translated *inchantments*, (5) are entirely different from that rendered enchantments in other passages of Scripture, and do not carry in them any sort of reference to sorcery or magic, or the interposition of any spiritual agents; they import deception and concealment, and ought to have been rendered *secret sleights* or *jugglings*, and are thus translated even by those who adopt the common hypothesis with regard to the magicians. These *secret sleights and jugglings* are expressly referred to the magicians, not to the devil, who is not so much as mentioned in the history. Should we therefore be asked, (6) How it came to pass, in case the works of the magicians were performed by sleight of hand, that Moses has given no *hint* hereof? we answer, He has not contented himself with a hint of this kind, but, at the same time that he ascribes his own miracles to Jehovah, he has, in the most *direct terms*, resolved every thing done in imitation of them entirely to the fraudulent contrivances of his opposers, to legerdemain or sleight of hand, in contradistinction from magical incantations. Moses therefore could not design to represent their works as real miracles, at the very time he was branding them as impostures.

"It remains only to show, that the works performed by the magicians did not exceed the cause to which they are ascribed; or in other words, the magicians proceeded no farther in imitation of Moses, than *human artifice* might enable them to go, (while the miracles of Moses were not liable to the same impeach-

(5) The original word used, Exod. viii, 11, is *Belahatehem;* and that which occurs, ch. vii, 22, and ch. viii, 7, 18, is *Belatehem;* the former is probably derived from *Lahat*, which signifies to *burn*, and the substantive a *flame* or *shining sword-blade*, and is applied to the flaming sword which guarded the tree of life, Gen. iii, 24. Those who formerly used legerdemain, dazzled and deceived the sight of spectators by the art of brandishing their swords, and sometimes seemed to eat them, and to thrust them into their bodies; and the expression seems to intimate, that the magicians appearing to turn their rods into serpents, was owing to their eluding the eyes of the spectators by a dexterous management of their swords. In the preceding instances they made use of some different contrivance, for the latter word, *belatehem*, comes from *Laat*, to *cover* or *hide*, (which some think the former word also does,) and therefore fitly expresses any secret artifices or methods of deception, whereby false appearances are imposed upon the spectators.

(6) As we are by Dr. Macknight, in his Truth of the Gospel History, p. 372.

ment, and bore upon themselves the plainest signatures of that Divine power to which they are referred.) If this can be proved, the interposition of the devil on this occasion will appear to be an hypothesis invented without any kind of necessity, as it certainly is without any authority from the sacred text.

"1. With regard to the first attempt of the magicians, the *turning rods into serpents:* it cannot be accounted extraordinary that they should seem to succeed in it, when we consider that these men were famous for the art of dazzling and deceiving the sight; and that serpents, being first rendered tractable and harmless, as they easily may, have had a thousand different tricks played with them, to the astonishment of the spectators.

"2. With regard to the next attempt of the magicians to imitate Moses, who had already turned all the running and standing waters of Egypt into blood, there is no difficulty in accounting for their success in the degree in which they succeeded. For it was during the continuance of this judgment, when no water could be procured but by *digging round about the river*, that the magicians attempted by some proper preparations to change the colour of the small quantity that was brought them, (probably endeavouring to persuade Pharaoh that they could as easily have turned a larger quantity into blood.) In a case of this nature imposture might, and, as we learn from history, often did take place. It is related by Valerius Maximus, (*Lib.* i, c. 6,) that the wine poured into the cup of Xerxes was three times changed into blood. But such trifling feats as these could not at all disparage the miracle of Moses; the vast extent of which raised it above the suspicion of fraud, and stamped upon every heart, that was not steeled against all conviction, the strongest impression of its divinity. For he turned their streams, rivers, ponds, and the water in all their receptacles, into blood. And the fish that was in the river (Nile) died; and the river stank, Exod vii, 19–21.

"3. Pharaoh not yielding to this evidence, God proceeded to farther punishments, and covered the whole land of Egypt with frogs. (7) Before these frogs were removed, the magicians undertook to bring into some place cleared for the purpose a fresh supply; which they might easily do when there was such plenty every where at hand. Here also the narrow compass of the work exposed it to the suspicion of being effected by human art; to which the miracle of Moses was not liable; the infinite number of frogs which filled the whole kingdom of Egypt, (so that their ovens, beds, and tables, swarmed with them,) being a proof of their immediate miraculous production. Beside, the magicians were unable to procure their *removal:* which was accomplished by Moses, at the submissive application of Pharaoh, and at the very time that Pharaoh himself chose, the more clearly to convince him that God was the author of these miraculous judgments, and that their infliction or removal did not depend upon the influence of the elements or stars, at set times or in critical junctures, Exod. viii, 8.

"4. The history of the last attempt of the magicians confirms the account here given of all their former ones. Moses turned all the dust of the land into lice, and this plague, like the two preceding ones, being inflicted at the word of Moses, and extended over the whole kingdom of Egypt, must necessarily have been owing, not to human art, but to a Divine power. Nevertheless, the motives upon which the magicians at first engaged in the contest with Moses, the shame of desisting and some slight appearances of success in their former attempts, prompted them still to carry on the imposture, and to try *with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not.* With all their skill in magic, and with all

(7) Exod viii, 6–8. Nor, indeed, can it be imagined, that after this or the former plague had been removed, Pharaoh would order his magicians to renew either.

their dexterity in deceiving the spectators, they could not even succeed so far as they had done in former instances, by producing a specious counterfeit of this work of Moses. Had they hitherto performed real miracles by the assistance of the devil, how came they to desist now? It cannot be a greater miracle to produce lice, than to turn rods into serpents, water into blood, and to create frogs It has, indeed, been very often said, that the devil was now laid under a *restraint*. but hitherto no proof of this assertion has been produced. The Scripture is silent, both as to the devil being now restrained from interposing any farther in favour of the magicians, and as to his having afforded them his assistance on the former occasions. But if we agree with Moses in ascribing to the magicians nothing more than the artifice and dexterity which belonged to their profession; we shall find that their want of success in their last attempt was owing to the different nature and circumstances of their enterprise."

Note B.—Page 166.

"But if at any time evil spirits, by their subtlety and experience, and knowledge of affairs in the world, did foretell things which accordingly came to pass, they were things that happened not long after, and commonly such as themselves did excite and prompt men to. Thus, when the conspiracy against Cesar was come just to be put into execution, and the devil had his agents concerned in it, he could foretell the time and place of his death. But it had been foretold to Pompey, Crassus, and Cesar himself before, as Tully informs us from his own knowledge, that they should all die in their beds, and in an honourable old age, who yet all died violent deaths. Wise and observing men have sometimes been able to make strange predictions concerning the state of affairs; and therefore spirits may be much more able to do it. Evil spirits could fortell what they were permitted to inflict or procure: they might have foretold the calamities of Job, or the death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead.

"The devil could not always foretell what was to come to pass, and therefore his agents had need of their vaults and hollow statues, and other artifices to conceal their ignorance, and help them out when their arts of conjuration failed. But we have no reason to think that the devil, who is so industrious to promote his evil ends, by all possible means, would omit such an opportunity as was given him by the opinion which the heathens had of their oracles; and the trials which Crœsus and Trajan made are sufficient to prove that there was something supernatural and diabolical in them. Crœsus sent to have many oracles consulted at a set time, and the question to be put to them was, what Crœsus himself at that time was doing; and he resolved to be employed about the most improbable thing that could be imagined, for he was boiling a tortoise and a lamb together in a brass pot; and yet the oracle of Delphi discovered to the messengers what the king was then about. Trajan, when he was going into Parthia, sent a blank paper sealed up, to an oracle of Assyria for an answer: the oracle returned him another blank paper, to show that it was not so to be imposed upon.

"But though things of present concernment were discovered both to Crœsus and Trajan beyond all human power to know, yet both were imposed upon by ambiguous answers, when they consulted about things future, of which the devil could not attain the knowledge.

"Many of the heathen priests themselves, upon examination, publicly confessed several of their oracles to be impostures, and discovered the whole contrivance

and management of the deceit, which was entered upon record. And in the rest, the power of the devil was always so limited and restrained, as to afford sufficient means to undeceive men, though many of his predictions might come to pass." (JENKINS'S *Reasonableness of Christianity.*)

"Many of the learned regard all the heathen oracles as the result of the grossest imposture. Some consider them as the work of evil spirits. Others are of opinion, that through these oracles some real prophecies were occasionally vouchsafed to the Gentile world, for their instruction and consolation. But to whichsoever of these opinions we may incline, it will not be difficult to discover a radical difference between these and the Scripture prophecies.

"In the heathen oracles, we cannot discern any clear and unequivocal tokens of genuine prophecy. They were destitute of dignity and importance, had no connection with each other, tended to no object of general concern, and never looked into times remote from their own. We read only of some few predictions and prognostications, scattered among the writings of poets and philosophers, most of which, beside being very weakly authenticated, appear to have been answers to questions of merely local, personal, and temporary concern, relating to the issue of affairs then actually in hand, and to events speedily to be determined. Far from attempting to form any *chain* of prophecies, respecting things far distant as to time or place, or matters contrary to human probability, and requiring supernatural agency to effect them, the heathen priests and soothsayers did not even pretend to a systematic and connected plan. They hardly dared, indeed, to assume the prophetic character in its full force, but stood trembling, as it were, on the brink of futurity, conscious of their inability to venture beyond the depths of human conjecture. Hence their predictions became so fleeting, so futile, so uninteresting, that they were never collected together as worthy of preservation, but soon fell into disrepute and almost total oblivion.

"The Scripture prophecies, on the other hand, constitute a series of predictions, relating principally to one grand object, of universal importance, the work of man's redemption, and carried on in regular progression through the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations, with a harmony and uniformity of design, clearly indicating one and the same Divine Author, who alone could say, 'Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.' The genuine prophets of the Almighty beheld these things with a clear and steadfast eye; they declared them with authority and confidence; and they gave, moreover, signs from heaven for the conviction of others. Accordingly their writings have been handed down from age to age; have been preserved with scrupulous fidelity; and have ever been regarded with reverence, from the many incontestable evidences of their accomplishment, and from their inseparable connection with the religious hopes and expectations of mankind." (*Bishop of Llandaff.*)

CHAPTER XVII.

PROPHECIES OF SCRIPTURE.

THE nature and force of the argument from prophecy have been already stated; (*Vide* chap. ix;) and it has been proved, that where *real predictions* are uttered,—not *happy conjectures* which shrewd and

observing men may sometimes make, but predictions which imply fore sight of events dependent upon the various contingencies of human affairs, and a knowledge of the characters, dispositions, and actions of persons yet unborn, so as to decide unerringly on the conduct which they will pursue—they can only be uttered by inspired men, and the author of such communications can be no other than the *infinite* and *omniscient* God, "*showing to his servants the things which shall be hereafter*," in order to authenticate their mission, and to affix the stamp of his own infallible authority upon their doctrine.

The authenticity and the antiquity of the records which contain these predictions, have been already established; and the only subject of inquiry proper to this chapter is, the prophetic character of the predictions said to be contained in the Old and New Testaments. A few general observations may however be previously allowed.

1. The instances to be considered by those who would fully satisfy themselves on this point are not *few* but *many*. The believer in the Divine authority of the Old and New Testaments, is ready to offer for examination great numbers of professed prophecies relative to individuals, cities, states, the person and offices of Messiah, and the Christian Church, which he alleges to have been unequivocally fulfilled; independent of predictions which he believes to be now fulfilling; or which are hereafter to be fulfilled in the world.

2. If as to the fulfilment of some particular prophecies, the opinions of men should differ, there is an abundance of others, the accomplishment of which has been so evident as to defy any rational interpretation which will not involve their fulfilment; while unbelievers are challenged to show any clear prediction of Holy Scripture which has been falsified by the event throughout the whole range of those ages which are comprehended by the Bible, from the Pentateuch to the Apocalypse.

3. The predictions in Scripture have already been distinguished in their character from the oracles and divinations of the heathen; (*Vide* chap. xvi;) and it may here be farther observed, that they are not, generally, separate and insulated predictions of the future, arising out of accidental circumstances, and connecting themselves with merely individual interests and temporary occasions. On the contrary, they chiefly relate to, and arise out of a grand scheme for the moral recovery of the human race from ignorance, vice, and wretchedness. They speak of the agents to be employed in it, and especially of the great agent, the REDEEMER himself; and of those mighty and awful proceedings of Providence as to the nations of the earth, by which judgment and mercy are exercised with reference both to the ordinary principles of moral government, and especially to this restoring economy, to its struggles, its oppositions, and its triumphs. They all meet in CHRIST, as in their proper centre, and in him only, however many of the single lines, when

considered apart, may be imagined to have another direction, and though they may pass through intermediate events. "If we look," says Bishop Hurd, "into the prophetic writings, we find that prophecy is of a prodigious extent; that it commenced from the fall of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things; that for many ages it was delivered darkly, to a few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of another; but at length became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world—among other reasons assigned, for this principally, to be the repository of the Divine Oracles; that, with some intermission, the spirit of prophecy subsisted among that people to the coming of Christ, that he himself, and his apostles, exercised this power in the most conspicuous manner; and left behind them many predictions recorded in the books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or in St. John's expression, to that period, 'when the mystery of God shall be perfected.' Farther, beside the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the *person* whom it concerns, deserves our consideration. He is described in terms which excite the most august and magnificent ideas. He is spoken of, indeed, sometimes as being *the seed of the woman*, and as *the Son of man*; yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us as being superior to men and angels; as far above all principality and power; above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth; as the Word and Wisdom of God; as the eternal Son of the Father; as the Heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds; as the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. We have no words to denote greater ideas than these: the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendent worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be, to whom all the prophets bear witness!

"Lastly, the declared purpose for which the Messiah, prefigured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world, corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is, to achieve one of those acts which history accounts most heroic. No: it was not a mighty state, a victor people—

Non res Romanæ perituraque regna—

that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this Divine person. It was another, and far sublimer purpose which he came to accomplish; a purpose, in comparison of which all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man as nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin; to abolish sin and death; to purify and immortalize human nature; and thus, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be

the Saviour of men and the blessing of all nations. There is no exaggeration in this account. I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words of Scripture. Consider then to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it, and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy pervading all time—characterizing one person, of the highest dignity—and proclaiming the accomplishment of one purpose, the most beneficent, the most Divine, the imagination itself can project. Such is the Scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that economy which we call prophetic."

4 Prophecy, in this peculiar sense, and on this ample scale, is peculiar to the religious system of the Holy Scriptures. Nothing like it is found any where beside; and it accords perfectly with that system, that nothing similar should be found elsewhere. "The prophecies of Scripture," says that accomplished scholar, Sir W. Jones, "bear no resemblance in form or style to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning. The antiquity of those compositions, no man of learning doubts; and the unrestrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief that they were genuine predictions, and consequently inspired." The advantage of this species of evidence belongs then exclusively to our revelation. Heathenism never made any clear and well-founded pretensions to it. Mohammedanism, though it stands itself as a proof of the truth of Scripture prophecy, is unsupported by a single prediction of its own. "To the Christian only belongs this testimony of his faith; this *growing* evidence gathering strength by length of time, and affording, from age to age, fresh proofs of its Divine origin. As a majestic river expands itself more and more the farther it removes from its source, so prophecy, issuing from the first promise in paradise as its fountain head, acquired additional strength and fulness as it rolled down successive ages, and will still go on increasing in extent and grandeur, until it shall finally lose itself in the ocean of eternity."

5. The objection which has been raised to Scripture prophecy from its supposed obscurity, has no solid foundation. There is, it is true, a prophetic language of symbol and emblem; but it is a language which is definite and not equivocal in its meaning, and as easily mastered as the language of poetry, by attentive persons. This, however, is not always used. The style of the prophecies of Scripture very often differs in nothing from the ordinary style of the Hebrew poets; *and, in not a few cases, and those too on which the Christian builds most in the argument, it sinks into the plainness of historical narrative.* Some degree of obscurity is essential to prophecy: for the end of it was not to gratify human curiosity, by a detail of future events and circumstances; and too great clearness and speciality might have led to many artful attempts to fulfil the predictions, and so far the evidence of their ac

complishment would have been weakened. The two great ends of prophecy are, to excite expectation before the event, and then to confirm the truth by a striking and unequivocal fulfilment; and it is a sufficient answer to the allegation of the obscurity of the prophecies of Scripture, that they have abundantly accomplished those objects, among the most intelligent and investigating, as well as among the simple and unlearned in all ages. It cannot be denied, for instance, leaving out particular cases which might be given, that by means of these predictions the expectation of the incarnation and appearance of a Divine *Restorer* was kept up among the people to whom they were given, and spread even to the neighbouring nations; that as these prophecies multiplied, the hope became more intense; and that at the time of our Lord's coming, the expectation of the birth of a very extraordinary person prevailed, not only among the Jews, but among other nations. This purpose was then sufficiently answered, and an answer is given to the objection. In like manner prophecy serves as the basis of our hope in things yet to come; the final triumph of truth and righteousness on earth, the universal establishment of the kingdom of our Lord, and the rewards of eternal life to be bestowed at his second appearing. In these all true Christians agree; and their hope could not have been so uniformly supported in all ages, and under all circumstances, had not the prophecies and predictive promises conveyed with sufficient clearness the general knowledge of the good for which they looked, though many of its particulars be unrevealed. The second end of prophecy is, to confirm the truth by the subsequent event; and here the question of the actual fulfilment of Scripture prophecy is involved, to which we shall immediately advert. We only now observe, that it is no argument against the unequivocal fulfilment of several prophecies, that many have doubted or denied what the believers in revelation have on this subject so strenuously contended for. How few of mankind have read the Scriptures with serious attention, or been at the pains to compare their prophecies with the statements in history! How few, especially of the objectors to the Bible, have read it in this manner! How many of them have confessed, unblushingly, their unacquaintance with its contents, or have proved what they have not confessed by the mistakes and misrepresentations into which they have fallen. As for the Jews, the evident dominion of their prejudices; their general averseness to discussion; and the extravagant principles of interpretation they have adopted for many ages, which set all sober criticism at defiance, render nugatory any authority which might be ascribed to their denial of the fulfilment of certain prophecies in the sense adopted by Christians. We may add to this, that among Christian critics themselves there may be much disagreement. Eccentricities and absurdities are found among the learned in every department of knowledge, and much of this waywardness, and affectation of

singularity has infected interpreters of Scripture. But, after all, there is a truth and reason in every subject which the understandings of the generality of men will apprehend and acknowledge, whenever it is fully understood and impartially considered; to this, in all such cases, the appeal can only be made, and here it may be made with confidence

6. For want of a right apprehension of the meaning of somewhat an unfortunate term which has obtained in theology, the "*double sense*" of many prophecies, an objection of another kind has been raised, as though no definite meaning could be assigned to the prophecies of Scripture. Nothing can be more unfounded. "The *double sense* of many prophecies in the Old Testament," says an able writer, "has been made a pretext by ill-disposed men, for representing them as of uncertain meaning, and resembling the ambiguity of the pagan oracles. But whoever considers the subject with due attention, will perceive how little ground there is for such an accusation. The equivocations of the heathen oracles manifestly arose from their ignorance of future events, and from their endeavours to conceal that ignorance, by such indefinite expressions, as might be equally applicable to two or more events of a *contrary* description. But the double sense of the Scripture prophecies, far from originating in any doubt or uncertainty, as to the fulfilment of them in *either* sense, springs from a foreknowledge of their accomplishment in *both*; whence the prediction is purposely so framed as to include *both* events, which, so far from being *contrary* to each other, are *typical* the one of the other, and are thus connected together by a mutual dependency or relation. This has often been satisfactorily proved, with respect to those prophecies which referred, in their primary sense, to the events of the Old Testament, and, in their farther and more complex signification, to those of the New: and on this double accomplishment of *some* prophecies is grounded our firm expectation of the completion of *others* which remain yet unfulfilled in their secondary sense, but which we justly consider as equally certain in their issue, as those which are already past. So far, then, from any valid objection lying against the credibility of the Scripture prophecies, from these seeming ambiguities of meaning, we may urge them as additional proofs of their coming from God. For, who but the Being, who is infinite in knowledge and in counsel, could so construct predictions as to give them a two-fold application, to events distant from, and (to *human* foresight) unconnected with, each other? What power less than Divine could so frame them, as to make the accomplishment of them, in one instance, a solemn pledge and assurance of their completion in another instance, of still higher and more universal importance? Where will the scoffer find any thing like this in the artifices of heathen oracles, to conceal their ignorance, and to impose on the credulity of mankind?"

We now proceed to the enumeration of a few out of the great number

of predictions contained in the Scriptures, which most unequivocally show a perfect knowledge of future contingent events, and which, therefore, according to our argument, as certainly prove that they who uttered them "*spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*," by the Spirit of the *omniscient* and infinitely prescient GOD. (8)

The very first promise made to man is a prediction which none could have uttered but He whose eye looks through the depths of future ages, and knows the result as well as the beginning of all things. "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" In vain is it attempted to resolve the whole of the transaction with which this prediction stands connected, into *allegory*. Such criticism, if applied to any other ancient historical book, bearing marks of authentic narration as unequivocal as the book of Genesis, would not be tolerated by the advocates of this absurd conception themselves, whether they are open or disguised infi-

(8) "The correspondences of types and antitypes, though they are not proper proofs of the truth of a doctrine, yet may be very reasonable confirmations of the foreknowledge of God; of the uniform view of Providence under different dispensations; of the analogy, harmony, and agreement, between the Old Testament and the New. The words of the law concerning one particular kind of death, *He that is hanged is accursed of God*, can hardly be conceived to have been put in on any other account, than with a view and foresight to the application made of it by St. Paul. The analogies between the paschal lamb and the *Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world;* between the *Egyptian bondage and the tyranny of sin;* between the *baptism of the Israelites in the sea and in the cloud*, and the *baptism of Christians;* between the *passage* through the wilderness, and through the *present world;* between *Joshua* bringing the people into the *promised land*, and *Jesus Christ* being the *Captain of salvation* to believers; between the Sabbath of *rest* promised to the *people of God* in the earthly *Canaan*, and the eternal *rest* promised to the *people of God* in the heavenly *Canaan;* between the liberty granted them from the time of the *death of the high priest*, to him that had fled into a *city of refuge*, and the *redemption* purchased by the *death of Christ;* between the *high priest entering into the holy place every year with the blood of others*, and Christ's *once entering with his own blood into heaven itself, to appear in the shadows of things to come, of good things to come*, the *shadows of heavenly things*, the *presence of God for us*. These, I say and innumerable other analogies, between the *figures for the time then present, patterns of things in the heavens, and the heavenly things themselves*, cannot without the force of strong prejudice be conceived to have happened by mere chance, without any foresight or design. There are no such analogies, much less such series of analogies, found in the books of more enthusiastic writers living in such remote ages from each other. It is much more credible and reasonable to suppose, what St. Paul affirms, that *these things were our examples;* and that in that uniform course of God's government of the world, *all things happened unto them of old for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*. And hence arises that aptness of similitude, in the application of several legal performances to the morality of the Gospel, that it can very hardly be supposed not to have been originally intended." (DR. S. CLARKE'S *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 263.)

dels. In vain is it alleged, that a mere fact of natural history is stated: for if the words are understood to express no more than the enmity between the human race and serpents, it would require to be proved, in order to establish a special punishment of the serpent, that man has a greater hostility to serpents than to other dangerous animals, which he extirpates whenever he can master them by force or stratagem; and that serpents have a stronger disposition to do injury to men, than to those animals which they make their daily prey, or to others which they never fail to strike when within their reach. As this was obviously false in fact, Moses could not assert it; and, if it had been true in natural history, to have said this and nothing more, to have confined himself to the mere literal fact, a fact of no importance, would have been far below the character of Moses as a writer—a lofty and sublime character, to which the heathens and sometimes infidels themselves have done justice. In no intelligible sense can these celebrated words be understood, but in that in which they are fixed by innumerable references and allusions of other parts of the sacred volume, and which ought, in all good criticism, to determine their meaning. The serpent, and the seed of the woman, are the representatives of two invisible and mighty powers; the one good, the other evil; the one Divine, though incarnate of the woman, the other diabolic; between whom an enmity was placed, which was to express itself in a long and fearful struggle, in the course of which the seed of the woman should sustain a temporary wound and suffering, but which should issue in the bruising of the head, the inflicting a fatal blow upon the power, of his adversary. The scene of this contest was to be our globe, and *generally* the visible agents of it men, under their respective leaders, the serpent on the one side, and the seed of the woman on the other, practising, and advocating, and endeavouring to render dominant truth or error, virtue or vice, obedience to God or rebellion against his authority. We ask then, has such a contest of principles and powers taken place in the world, or not? The answer must be in the affirmative; for every age bears witness to it. We see it commencing in Cain and Abel—in the resistance of the antediluvians to the righteousness taught by Noah;—in their punishment;—in the rise of idolatry, and the struggles of the truth in opposition to it;—in the inflictions of singular judgments upon nations, for the punishment and exposure of idolatry, as in the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of the nations of Canaan, &c. We trace the contest throughout the whole history of the Jewish nation down to the coming of our Lord; and occasionally we see it extending into the neighbouring pagan nations, although they were generally, *as a part of their punishment*, "*suffered to walk in their own ways*," and Satan as to them was permitted to "*keep his goods in peace*," till the time of gracious visitation should arrive. We see the incarnate Redeemer, for a time suffering, and at length dying. Then

was "*the hour and power of darkness;*" then was his *heel* bruised: but he died only to revive again, more visibly and powerfully to establish his kingdom and to commence his spiritual conquests. In every direction were the regions, where Satan "*had his seat,*" penetrated by the heavenly light of the doctrine of Christ; and every where the most tremendous persecutions were excited against its unarmed and unprotected preachers and their converts. But the gates of hell prevailed not against the Church founded on a rock, and "*Satan fell as lightning from heaven,*"—from the thrones, and temples, and judgment seats, and schools of the ancient civilized world; the idolatry of ages was renounced; Christ was adored through the vast extent of the Roman empire, and in many of the countries beyond even its ample sweep. Under other forms the enemy revived, and the contest was renewed; but in every age it has been maintained. The principles of pure evangelical truth were never extinguished; and the "*children of the kingdom,*" were "*minished and brought low,*" only to render the renewal of the assault by unexpected agents, singularly raised up, more marked and more eminently of God. We need not run over even the heads of the history of the Church: what is the present state of things? The contest still continues, but with increasing zeal on the part of Christians, who are carrying on offensive operations against the most distant parts of the long-undisturbed kingdom of darkness; placing there the principles of truth; commencing war upon idolatry and superstition; and establishing the institutions of the Christian Church with a success which warrants the hope that the time is not far distant, when the "*head of the serpent will be bruised*" in all idolatrous countries, and the idols of modern heathen states, like those of old, be displaced, to introduce the worship of the universal Saviour, "GOD *over all, blessed for ever.*"

May we not ask, whether all this was not infinitely above human foresight? Who could confidently state that a contest of this peculiar nature would continue through successive ages; that men would not all go over to one or other of the opposing parties; nay, who could confidently conjecture in the age of Moses, (when the tendency to idolatry had become so strong, that the chosen seed themselves, under the constant demonstration of miracles, visibly blessed while they remained faithful to the worship of God, and as eminently and visibly punished when they departed from it, could not be preserved from the infection,) that idolatry should one day be abolished throughout the earth? Past experience and all probabilities were opposed to the hope that the cause of the seed of the woman should prevail, and yet it stands recorded, "*it* [rather HE,] *shall bruise thy head.*" Infidels may scoff at a Redeemer, and deride the notion of a tempter; but they cannot deny that such a contest between opposite parties and principles as is here foretold has actually taken place, and still continues: that contest, so extended, so continued, and

so terminated, human foresight could not foretel' ; and the fact established, therefore, is an accomplishment of a prophecy, which could originate only in Divine prescience.

The celebrated prediction of Jacob at the close of his life respecting the time of the appearing of "SHILOH," may next be considered.

The word signifies, "*He who is to be sent*," or "*The Peace maker.*' In either sense, the application to that great Person, to whom all the patriarchs looked forward, and the prophets gave witness, is obvious. Those who doubt this, are bound to give us a better interpretation. —Before a certain *event*, a certain *person* was to come, to whom the people should be gathered. The event has certainly arrived, but who is the person? The application of the prophecy to Messiah is not an invention of Christians. The ancient Jews, as appears from their commentators, so understood it: and the modern ones are unable to resist the evidence drawn from it, in favour of the claims of our Lord. That it is a prediction, is proved from its form, and the circumstances under which it was delivered; that it has received a singular accomplishment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, is also certain; and it is equally certain, that no individual beside can be produced, in whom it has been in any sense whatever accomplished. For the ample illustration of the prophecy the reader is referred to commentators, and to Bishop Newton's well-known work on the prophecies. It is sufficient here to allege, that Judah, *as a tribe*, remained till after the advent of Jesus Christ, which cannot be said of the long-dispersed ten tribes, and scarcely of Benjamin, which was merged in the tribe of Judah.—CHUBB asks where the supremacy of Judah was, when Nebuchadnezzar carried the whole nation captive to Babylon; when Alexander subdued Palestine; and when it was a tributary province to the Roman empire? The prediction, however, does not convey the idea either of independent or supreme power. This no one tribe had when all were united in one state, and each had its sceptre and its princes or chiefs. It is therefore enough to show, that under all its various fortunes, the tribe of Judah retained its *ensigns*, and its *chiefs*, and its *tribeship*, until Shiloh came. It is no uncommon thing for a country to be conquered, and for its ancient princes and government to remain, though as tributary.

With respect to the tribe of Judah during the captivity in Babylon, Cyrus, as we learn from Ezra i, 8, ordered the vessels of the temple to be restored to "*the prince of Judah.*" This shows that the tribe was kept distinct, and that it had its own internal government and chief. Under the dominion of the Asmonean kings, the Jews had their rulers, their elders, and their council, and so under the Romans. But soon after the death of Christ, all this was abolished, the nation dispersed, and the tribes utterly confounded. Till our Lord came, and had accomplished his work on earth, the tribe of Judah continued. This is matter of unques-

tionable historic fact. In a short time afterward it was dispersed and mingled with the common mass of Jews of all tribes and countries: this is equally unquestionable. Now again we ask, could either human foresight determine this, or is the application of the event to the prophecy fanciful? The prediction was uttered in the very infancy of the state of Israel, by the father of the fathers of the tribes of that people. Ages passed away; the mightiest empires were annihilated; ten of the chosen tribes themselves were utterly dispersed into unknown countries; another became so insignificant as to lose its designation; one only remained which imposed its very name upon the nation at large, the object of public observation until the Messiah came, and that tribe was Judah, the tribe spoken of in the prediction, and it remained as it were only to make the fulfilment manifest, and was then confounded with the relics of the rest What prescience of countless contingencies, occurring in the intervening ages, does this imply?—A prescience truly, which can only belong to God.

The predictions respecting the Jewish nation, commencing with those of Moses, and running through all their prophets, are too numerous to be adduced. One of the most instructive and convincing exercises to those who have any doubt of the inspiration of the Scriptures, would be, seriously and candidly to peruse them, and by the aid of those authors who have expressly and largely written on this subject, to compare the prophecies with their alleged fulfilment. Three topics are prominent in the predictions of Moses and the prophets generally,—the frequent and gross departures of the Jews from their own law; their signal punishment in invasions, captivities, dispersions, oppressions, and persecutions; and their final restoration to their own land. All these have taken place. Even the last was accomplished by the return from Babylon, though, in its eminent sense, it is still future. In pursuance of the argument, we shall show, that each of these was above human foresight and conjecture.

The apostacies and idolatries of this people were foretold by Moses before his death. "*I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and evil will befall you in the latter days*," Deut. xxxi, 29; and he accordingly prophetically declares their punishment. It is, perhaps, scarcely possible to fix upon a stronger circumstance than this prediction, to prove that Moses was truly commissioned by God, and did not pretend a Divine sanction in order to give weight to his laws and to his personal authority. The rebellious race whom he had first led into the desert, had died there; and the new generation was much more disposed to obey their leader. At the moment he wrote these words, appearances had a favourable aspect on the future obedience of the people. If this had not been the case, the last thought a merely political man would

have been disposed to indulge was, that his own favourite institutions should fall into desuetude and contempt; and much less would he finish his public life by openly telling the people that he foresaw that event, even if he feared it. It may, indeed, be said, that he uttered this conviction for the purpose of giving a colour to the threatenings which he pronounces against disobedience to his law, and that the object of those fearful menaces was to deter the people from departing from customs and rules which he was anxious, for the sake of his own fame, that they should observe. To this we answer, that Moses could not expect any weight to be attached by the Israelites to his threat, that the Divine judgments would be inflicted upon them for not obeying his laws, unless their former rebellions had been immediately and signally marked by such visitations. Without this to support him, he would have appeared in a ridiculous, rather than in an impressive and sublime attitude before the people assembled to hear his last commands. For forty years his institutions had been often disobeyed, and if no inflictions of the Divine displeasure followed, what reason had they to credit the menaces of Moses as to the future? But if such inflictions had resulted from their disobedience, every thing is rational and consistent in this part of the conduct of their leader. Let the infidel choose which of these positions he pleases. If he think that Moses aimed to deter them from departing from his institutions by empty threats, he ascribes an incredible absurdity to an unquestionably wise, and, as infidels themselves contend, a very politic man; but if his predictive threats were grounded upon former marked and acknowledged interpositions of Divine Providence, the only circumstance which could give them weight, he was God's commissioned leader, and, as he professed, an inspired prophet.

It is a circumstance of great weight in the predictions of Moses respecting the punishment of the Jews, that these famines, pestilences, invasions, subjugations to foreign enemies, captivities, &c, are represented solely as the consequences of their vicious departures from God, and from his laws Now, who could foresee, except an inspired man, that such evils would in *no instance* take place,—that no famine, no blight, no invasion would occur in Judea, *except* in obvious punishment of their offences against their law? What was there in the common course of things to prevent a small state, though observant of the precepts of its own religion, from falling under the dominion of more powerful neighbouring nations, except the special protection of God? and what but this could guard them from the plagues and famines to which their neighbours were liable? If the predictions of Moses were not inspired, they assume a principle which mere human wisdom and policy never takes into its calculations,—that of the connection of the national prosperity of a people, inseparably and infallibly, with obedience to their holy writings; and because they assume that singular principle, the conclusion is in

favour of their inspiration. For let us turn to the facts of the case. The sacred books of the Jews are historical as well as prophetic. The history too is distinct from the prophecy; it is often written by other authors; and there is no mark at all of any designed accommodation of the one to the other. The singular simplicity of the historic narrative disproves this, as well as the circumstance, that a great part of it as recorded in the Old Testament is a transcript of their public records. Consult then this history, and in every instance of singular calamity we see a previous departure from the law of Moses; the one following the other, almost with the regularity and certainty of natural effects and causes! In this the predictions of Moses and the prophets are strikingly accomplished; and a more than human foresight is proved.

Let us look farther into the detail of these threatened punishments. Beside the ordinary inflictions of failing harvests, and severe diseases, in their own country, they were, according to the prophecies of Moses, Deut. xxviii, to be "*scattered among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other;*" and where is the trading nation in which they are not, in Asia, Africa, and Europe? Many are even to be found in the West Indies, and in the commercial parts of America. Who could foresee this but God; especially when their singular preservation as a distinct people, a solitary instance in the history of nations, is also implied?·(9) They were to find "*no ease*" *among these nations;* and the almost constant and long-continued persecutions, robberies, and murder of Jews, not only in ancient nations, but especially among Christian nations of the middle ages, and in the Mohammedan states to this day, are in wonderful accomplishment of this. They were to be "*a proverb and a bye-word among all nations,*" which has been in every place fulfilled, but was surely above human intelligence to foresee; and "*the stranger that is within thee shall get above thee very high, and thou shalt come very low.*" For a comment on this, let the conduct of the "*stranger,*" Turks and others, who inhabit Palestine, toward the Jews who remain there, be recollected,—the one party is indeed "*very high,*" and he other "*very low.*" Other parts of this singular chapter present equally striking predictions, uttered more than three thousand years ago, as remarkably accomplished; but there are some passages in it, which refer in terms so particular to a then distant event, the utter subversion of their polity and nation by the Romans, as to demonstrate in

(9) "They have been dispersed among all countries. They have no common tie of locality or government to keep them together. All the ordinary principles of assimilation, which make law, and religion, and manners, so much a matter of geography, are in their instance suspended. And in exception to every thing which history has recorded of the revolutions of the species, we see in this wonderful race a vigorous principle of identity, which has remained in undiminished force for nearly two thousand years, and still pervades every shred and fragment of their widely scattered population" (CHALMERS's *Evidences.*)

the most unequivocal manner the prescience of Him to whom all events, the most contingent, minute, and distant, are known with absolute certainty. That the Romans are intended, in verse 49, by the nation brought from "*the end of the earth*," distinguished by their well-known ensign *the eagle*," and by their fierce and cruel disposition, is exceedingly probable: and it is remarkable, that the account which Moses gives of the horrors of the "siege" of which he speaks, is exactly paralleled by those well known passages in Josephus, in which he describes the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman army. The last verse of the chapter seems indeed to fix the reference of the foregoing passages to the final destruction of the nation by the Romans, and at the same time contains a prediction, the accomplishment of which cannot possibly be ascribed to accident. "*And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your ememies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.*" On this Dr. Hales remarks, on the authority of their own national historian, Josephus, "Of the captives taken at the siege of Jerusalem, above seventeen years of age, some were sent to Egypt in chains, the greater part were distributed through the provinces to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword, and by wild beasts the rest under seventeen were sold for slaves, and that for a trifling sum on account of the numbers to be sold, and the scarcity of buyers: so that at length the prophecy of Moses was fulfilled—'*and no man shall buy.*' The part that were reserved to grace the triumph of Vespasian were probably transported to Italy in '*ships*' or by sea, to avoid a prodigious land journey thither through Asia and Greece,—a circumstance which distinguished this invasion and captivity from the preceding by the Assyrians and Babylonians. In the ensuing rebellion, a part of the captives *were sent by sea to Egypt*, and several of the ships were wrecked on the coast."

Thus, at a distance of fifteen centuries, were these contingent circumstances accurately recorded by the prophetic spirit of Moses—the taking of innumerable Jews captive—their transport to Egypt—their being sold till the markets for slaves were glutted, and no more buyers were found, and embarked on board vessels, either to grace the triumph of their conqueror, or to find a market in different maritime ports. Is it possible that these numerous and minute circumstances can be referred to either happy conjectures or human foresight?

But Moses and other prophets agree, that, after all their captivities and dispersions, the Jews shall be again restored to their own land. This was, as we have said, in one instance accomplished in their restoration by Cyrus and his successors; after which they again became a considerable state. But who could foretell that, but HE who determines the events of the world by his power and wisdom? Jeremiah fixes the

duration of the captivity to seventy years; he did that so unequivocally, that the Jews in Babylon, when the time approached, began to prepare for the event. But there was nothing in the circumstances of the Babylonian empire when the prediction was uttered, to warrant the hope, much less to support a confident conjecture. Could the subversion of that powerful empire by a then obscure people, the circumstance which broke the bondage of the Jews, have been foreseen by man? or when we consider the event as fulfilling so distinct a prophecy, can it be resolved into imaginative interpretation? A future restoration however awaits this people, and will be to the world a glorious demonstration of the truth of prophecy. This being future, we cannot argue upon it. Three things are however certain:—the Jews themselves expect it; they are preserved by the providence of God a distinct people *for their country*; and their country, which in fact is possessed by no one, is preserved *for them*.

Without noticing numerous prophecies respecting ancient nations and cities, (1) the wonderful and exact accomplishment of which has been pointed out by various writers, and which afford numerous eminent instances of the prescience of contingent and improbable events, whose

(1) No work has exhibited in so pleasing and comprehensive a manner the fulfilment of the leading prophecies of Scripture, and especially of the Old Testament, as Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies; and the perusal of it may be earnestly recommended, especially to the young. His illustrations of the prophecies respecting ancient Babylon are exceedingly interesting and satisfactory and still farther proofs of the wonderfully exact accomplishment of those prophecies may be seen in a highly interesting Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, by Claudius J. Rich, published in 1815. Immense ruins were visited by him near the supposed site of ancient Babylon, which probably are, though the matter cannot be certainly ascertained, the remains of that astonishing city, now indeed "*swept with the besom of destruction.*" He tells us too, that the neighbourhood is to the present a habitation only for birds and beasts of prey; that the dens of lions, with their slaughtered victims, are to be seen in many places; and that most of the cavities are occupied with bats and owls. It is therefore impossible to reflect without awe upon the passage of Isaiah, written during the prosperity of Babylon, wherein he says, "The wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there." The present ruins of that city also demonstrate, that the course of the Euphrates has been changed, probably in consequence of the channel formed by Cyrus; and the yielding nature of the soil demonstrates that such an operation could have been performed by a large army with great facility and despatch.

The ruins examined by Mr. Rich bear testimony to the immense extent of the city as described by ancient authors. Vast masses of masonry, of both burnt and unburnt brick and bitumen, were observed in various excavations in these huge *mountains* of ruins, which are separated from each other by several miles. One is called by the Arabs, *Birs Nimrond*; another the *Kasr*, or Palace; and a third, which some have thought to be the ruins of the tower of Belus, is called by the natives *Mugelib*, OVERTURNED, which expressive term is also sometimes applied to the mounds of the Kasr.

evidence is so overwhelming, that, as in the case of the illustrious prophecies of Daniel, unbelievers have been obliged to resort to the subterfuge of asserting, in opposition to the most direct proofs, that the prophecies were written after the events, we shall close our instances by adverting to the prophecies respecting the Messiah,—the great end and object of the prophetic dispensation. Of these not a solitary instance, or two, of an equivocal kind, and expressed only in figurative or symbolic language, are to be adduced; but upward of *one hundred* predictions, generally of very clear and explicit meaning, and each referring to some different circumstance connected with the appearing of Christ, his person, history, and his ministry, have been selected by divines, *exclusive* of typical and allusive predictions, (2) and those which in an ultimate and remote sense are believed to terminate in him. How are all these to be disposed of, if the inspiration of the Scriptures which contain them be denied? That these predictions are in books written many ages before the birth of our Saviour, is certain—the testimony of the Jews who reject Christ, amply proves this. That no interpolations have taken place to accommodate them to him, is proved, by the same predictions being found in the copies which are in the hands of the Jews, and which have descended to them from before the Christian era. On the other hand, the history of Jesus answers to these predictions, and exhibits their exact accomplishment. The Messiah was to be of the seed of David—born in Bethlehem—born of a virgin—an incarnation of Deity, *God with us,*—an eminent but unsuccessful teacher;—he was to open the eyes of the blind, heal the lame and sick, and raise the dead—he was to be despised and rejected by his own countrymen; to be arraigned on false charges, denied justice, and condemned to a violent death—he was to rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of God, and there being invested with power and authority, he was to punish his enemies, and establish his own spiritual kingdom, which shall never end. We do not enter into more minute predictions, for the argument is irresistible when founded on these alone: and we may assert that no man, or number of men, could possibly have made such conjectures. Considered in themselves, this is impossible. What rational man, or number of rational men, could now be found to hazard a conjecture that an incarnation of Deity would occur in any given place and time—that this Divine Person should teach wisdom, work miracles, be unjustly put to death, rise again, and establish his religion? These are thoughts which never enter into the minds of men, because they are suggested by no experience, and by no probability arising out of the usual course of human affairs; and yet if the prophets were not inspired, it would have been as impossible for them to have conceived such expectations, as for us; and indeed much more so, seeing we are now familiar with a reli-

(2) See note, p. 181

gion which asserts that such events have once occurred. If then such events lay beyond not only human foresight, but even human thought, they can only be referred to inspiration. But the case does not close here. How shall we account, in the next place, for these circumstances all having met, strange as they are, in one person, and in one only among all the millions of men who have been born of woman,—and that person Jesus of Nazareth? He was of the house and *lineage of David* - he was born, and that by a singular event, in *Bethlehem*—he professed to be "*God with us*," and wrought miracles to substantiate his claim. At his word or touch, the "*eyes of the blind were opened*," "*the lame leaped as a hart*," the dumb spake, the sick were healed, and the dead lived, as the prophets had foretold. Of the *wisdom* of his teaching, his recorded discourses bear witness. His *rejection* and unjust *death* by his countrymen, are matters of historic fact; his *resurrection* and *ascension* stand upon the lofty evidences which have been already adduced: the destruction of the Jewish nation, according to his own predictions, followed as the proof of the terror of his offended majesty; and his "*kingdom*" among men continues to this day. There is no possible means of evading the evidence of the fulfilment of these predictions in the person of our Lord, unless it could be shown that Jesus and his disciples, by some kind of concert, made the events of his life and death to correspond with the prophecies, in order to substantiate his claim to the Messiahship. No infidel has ever been so absurd as to hazard this opinion, except Lord Bolinbroke; and his observations may be taken as a most triumphant proof of the force of this evidence from *prophecy*, when an hypothesis so extravagant was resorted to by an acute mind, in order to evade it. This noble writer asserts, that Jesus Christ brought on his own death by a series of wilful and preconcerted measures, merely to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the old prophecies! But this hypothesis does not reach the case; and to have succeeded, he ought to have shown, that our Lord preconcerted his descent from David—his being born of a virgin—his birth at Bethlehem—and his wonderful endowments of eloquence and wisdom: that by some means or other he wilfully made the Jews ungrateful to him who healed their sick and cleansed their lepers; and that he not only contrived his own death, but his resurrection, and his ascension also, and the spread of his religion in opposition to human opinion and human power, in order to give his disciples the triumph of an appeal to the prophecies! These subterfuges of infidels concede the point, and show that the truth cannot be denied but by doing the utmost violence to the understanding.

That wonderful series of particular prophecies respecting our Lord, commenced in Isaiah liii, will illustrate the foregoing observations, and may properly close this chapter.

To this prophecy it cannot be objected, that its language is symbolic,

or that in more than a few beautiful metaphors, easily understood, it is even figurative: its style is that of narrative; it is also entire in itself, and unmixed with any other subject; and it evidently refers to one single person. So the ancient Jews understood it, and applied it to Messiah; and though the modern Jews, in order to evade its force in the argument with Christians, allege that it describes the sufferings of their nation, and not of an individual, the objection is refuted by the terms of the prophecy itself. The Jewish people cannot be the *sufferer*, because he was to bear *their* griefs, to carry *their* sorrows, and to be wounded for *their* transgressions. "*He hath borne* OUR *griefs and carried* OUR *sorrows*," &c; so that the person of the sufferer is clearly distinguished from the Jewish nation. Beside which, his death and burial are spoken of, and his sufferings are represented (verse 12) as *voluntary;* which in no sense can apply to the Jews. "*Of himself, or of some other man*," therefore, as the Ethiopian eunuch rightly conceived, the prophet must have spoken. To some *individual* it must be applied; to none but to our Lord can it be applied; and applied to him, the prophecy is converted into history itself. The prophet declares, that his advent and works would be a revealing of "*the arm of the Lord*,"—a singular display of Divine power and goodness; and yet, that a blind and incredulous people would not believe "*the report*." Appearing in a low and humble condition, and not, as they expected their Messiah, in the pomp of eastern monarchy, his want of "*comeliness*" and "*desirableness*" in the eyes of his countrymen, and his rejection by them, are explicitly stated—"*He was despised, and we esteemed him not*." He is farther described as "*a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs;*" yet his sufferings were considered by the Jews as *judicial*,—a legal punishment, as they contend to this day, for his endeavouring to seduce men from the law, and for which they had the warrant of God himself in his commands by Moses, that such seducers should be put to death. With what exactness are these sentiments of the Jews marked in the prophecy! We quote from the translation of Bishop Lowth.

> "Yet we thought him JUDCIALLY stricken,
> SMITTEN OF GOD, and afflicted."

Christ himself and his apostles uniformly represented his death as vicarious and propitiatory; and this is predicted and confirmed, so to speak, by the evidence of this prophecy.

> "But he was wounded for *our* transgressions,
> He was smitten for *our* iniquities;
> The chastisement by which our peace is effected, was laid upon him;
> And by his bruises *we* are healed.
> We all of us like sheep have stray'd;
> We have turn'd aside, every one to his own way;
> And Jehovah hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all.
> *It was exacted and he was made answerable.*"

Who can read the next passage without thinking of Jesus before the council of the Jews, and the judgment seat of Pilate?

"As a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before her shearers
Is dumb; so he opened not his mouth.
By an oppressive judgment he was taken off."

The very circumstances of his burial are given:—

"And his grave was appointed with the wicked
But with the rich man was his tomb."

Yet, though thus laid in the grave, the eye of the prophet beholds his resurrection, "*the joy set before him*," and into which he entered; the distribution of spiritual blessings to his people, and his spiritual conquest of the nations of the earth, notwithstanding the opposition of "*the mighty*;" and he enumerates these particulars with a plainness so wonderful, that, by merely an alteration of the tenses of the verbs, the whole might be converted into an abridged view of what has occurred, and is now occurring under the Christian dispensation, in the furtherance of human salvation:—

If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice
He shall *see a seed*, which shall prolong their days,
And the gracious purpose of Jehovah shall prosper in his hands
Of the travail of his soul he shall see (the fruit) and be satisfied;
By the knowledge of him shall my servant justify many;
For the punishment of their iniquities he shall bear.
Therefore will I distribute to him the many for his portion,
And the mighty people shall he share for his spoil;
Because he pour'd his soul out unto death;
And was number'd with the transgressors:
And he bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors."

To all these predictions the words of a modern writer are applicable: "Let now the infidel, or the skeptical reader, meditate thoroughly and soberly upon these predictions. The priority of the records to the events admits of no question. The completion is obvious to every competent inquirer. Here then are facts. We are called upon to account for these facts on rational and adequate principles. Is human foresight equal to the task? Enthusiasm? Conjecture? Chance? Political contrivance? If none of these, neither can any other principle that may be devised by man's sagacity, account for the facts; then, true philosophy, as well as true religion, will ascribe them to the inspiration of the Almighty. Every effect must have a cause." (3)

(3) SIMPSON'S *Key to the Prophecies*. See also a large collection of prophecies with their fulfilment in the Appendix to vol. i, of HORNE'S *Introduction to the Scriptures*

CHAPTER XVIII.

Objections to the Evidence from Prophecy considered.

Beside the objections which have been anticipated and answered in the last chapter, others have been made to the argument from prophecy, which, though exceedingly futile, ought to receive a cursory notice, lest any should think them of greater importance.

It has been objected, as to some of the prophecies, that they were written after the event; as for instance, the prophecy of Isaiah in which the name of Cyrus is found, and the prophecies of Daniel. This allegation, standing as it does upon no evidence whatever, and being indeed in opposition to contrary proof, shows the hopelessness of the cause of infidelity, and affords a lofty triumph to the evidence of prophecy. For the objector does in fact acknowledge, that these predictions are not obscure; that the event exactly corresponded with them; and that they were beyond human conjecture. Without entering into those questions respecting the date of the books of Isaiah and Daniel, which properly belong to works on the canon of Scripture, we may observe, that the authors of this objection assert, but without giving the least proof, that Isaiah wrote his prophecies in order to flatter Cyrus, and that the book of Daniel was composed about the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. It is therefore admitted that both were extant, and in their present form, before the time of the Christian era; but if so, what end, we ask, is answered by the objection? The Scriptures, as received by the Jews, were verified by the sentence of our Lord and his apostles; and unless *their* inspiration can be disproved, the objection in question is a mere cavil. Before it can have any weight, the whole mass of evidence which supports the mission and Divine authority of our Saviour and the apostles, must be overthrown: and not till then can it in strictness of reasoning be maintained. But, not to insist on this, the assertion respecting Isaiah is opposed to positive testimony. The testimony of the prophet himself, who states that he lived "*in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah*;" and the testimony of an independent witness, the author of the Second Book of Kings, in the twentieth chapter of which book Isaiah is brought forward in connection with a public event of the Jewish history—the dangerous sickness and recovery of the King Hezekiah. The proof is then as decisive as the public records of a kingdom can make it, that Isaiah wrote more than a hundred years before the birth of Cyrus. (4)

(4) "But if you will persevere in believing that the prophecy concerning Cyrus was written after the event, peruse the burden of Babylon: was that also written after the event? Were the Medes *then* stirred up against Babylon? Was Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees, *then* overthrown, and become as Sodom and Gomorrah? Was it then uninhabited? Was

The time when Daniel lived and wrote is bound up in like manner with public history,—and that not only of the Jews, but of the Babylonians and Persians; and could not be antedated so as to impose upon the Jews, who received the book which bears his name into their canon, as the production of the same Daniel who had filled exalted stations in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. In favour of a later date being assigned to the book of Daniel, it has been said, that it has many Greek terms, and that it was not translated by the LXX, the translation now inserted in the Septuagint being by THEODOTIAN. With respect to the Greek terms, they are chiefly found in the names of the musical instruments; and the Greeks acknowledge that they derived their music from the eastern nations. With respect to the second objection, it is unfounded. The authors of the Septuagint did translate the book of Daniel, and their version is cited by CLEMENS ROMANUS, JUSTIN MARTYR, and many of the ancient fathers; it occupied a column of the Hexapla of Origen, and is quoted by JEROME. The present Greek version by Theodotian inserted in the Septuagint, was made in the second century, and preferred as being more conformable to the original. The repudiated version was published some years ago from an ancient MS. discovered at Rome. (5)

The opponents of Scripture are fond of the attempt to lower the dignity and authority of the sacred prophecies by comparing them to the heathen oracles. The absolute contrast between them has already been pointed out; (*Vide* chapter xvi;) but a few additional observations may not be useless.

Of the innumerable oracles which were established and consulted by the ancient heathen, the most celebrated was the Delphic; and we may, therefore, for the purpose of exhibiting the contrast more perfectly between the Pythian oracle and the prophecies of Scripture, confine our remarks to that.

The first great distinction lies in this, that none of the predictions ever

it *then* neither fit for the Arabian's tent nor the shepherd's fold? Did the wild beasts of the desert *then* lie there? Did the wild beasts of the islands *then* cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places? Were Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, the son and the grandson *then* cut off? Was Babylon *then* become a possession of the bittern and pools of water? Was it *then* swept with the besom of destruction, so swept that the world knows not now where to find it?" (Bishop WATSON'S *Apology.*)

(5) PORPHYRY, in his books against the Christian religion, was the first to attack the prophecies of Daniel; and in modern times, COLLINS, in his "Scheme of Literal Prophecy," bent all his force against a book so pregnant with proofs of the truth of Christianity, and the inspiration of ancient prophecy. By two learned opponents his eleven objections were most satisfactorily refuted, and shown to be mere cavils—by Bishop CHANDLER in his "Vindication" of his "Defence of Christianity," and by Dr. SAM. CHANDLER in his "Vindication of Daniel's Prophecies."

uttered by the Delphic oracle went deep into futurity. They relate to events on the eve of taking place, and whose *preparatory circumstances* were known. There was not even the pretence of foresight to the distance of a few years; though had it been a hundred years, even that were a very limited period to the eye of inspired prophets, who looked through the course of succeeding ages, and gave proof by the very sweep and compass of their predictions, that they were under the inspirations of Him to whom "*a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*"

A second contrast lies in the ambiguity of the responses. The prophecies of Scripture are sometimes obscure, though this does not apply to the most eminent of those which have been most signally fulfilled, as we have already seen; but they never *equivocate*. For this the Pythian oracle was notorious. Historians relate that CRŒSUS, who had expended large sums upon the agents of this delusion, was tricked by an equivocation; through which, interpreting the response most favourably for himself, he was induced to make an unsuccessful war on Cyrus. In his subsequent captivity he repeatedly reproached the oracle, and charged it with falsehood. The response delivered to PYRRHUS was of the same kind; and was so expressed as to be true, whether Pyrrhus conquered the Romans or the Romans Pyrrhus. Many other instances of the same kind are given; not to mention the trifling, and even bantering and jocose oracles, which were sometimes pronounced. (6)

The venality, wealth, and servility of the Delphic oracle, present another contrast to the poverty and disinterestedness of the Jewish prophets, whom no gifts could bribe, and no power awe in the discharge of their duty. Demosthenes, in one of his speeches to the Athenians, publicly charges this oracle with being "gained over to the interests of King Philip;" and the Greek historians give other instances in which it had been corrupted by money, and the prophetess sometimes deposed for bribery, sometimes for lewdness.

Neither threats nor persecutions had any influence with the Jewish prophets; but it would seem that this celebrated oracle of Apollo was not even proof against raillery. At first it gave its answers in verse;

(6) Eusebius has preserved some fragments of a philosopher called Œnomaus, who, out of resentment for his having been so often fooled by the oracles, wrote an ample confutation of all their impertinences: "When we come to consult thee," says he to Apollo, "if thou seest what is in futurity, why dost thou use expressions that will not be understood? If thou dost, thou takest pleasure in abusing us, if thou dost not, be informed of us, and learn to speak more clearly. I tell thee, that if thou intendest an equivoque, the Greek word whereby thou affirmedst that Crœsus should overthrow a great empire, was ill chosen; and that it could signify nothing but Crœsus's conquering Cyrus. If things must necessarily come to pass, why dost thou amuse us with thy ambiguities? What dost thou, wretch as thou art, at Delphi; employed in muttering idle prophecies?"

but the Epicureans, Cynics, and others laughing so much at the poorness of the versification, it fell at length into prose. "It was surprising," said these philosophic wits, "that Apollo, the god of poetry, should be a much worse poet than Homer, whom he himself had inspired." Plutarch considers this as a principal cause of the declension of the oracle of Delphos. Doubtless it had declined much in credit in his day; and the farther spread of Christianity completed its ruin.

Can then the prophecies of Scripture be paralleled with these dark, and venal, and delusive oracles, without impiety? and could any higher honour be wished for the Jewish prophets, than the comparison into which they are thus brought with the agents of paganism at Delphos and other places? They had recourse to no smooth speeches, no compliances with the tempers and prejudices of men. They concealed no truth which they were commissioned to declare, however displeasing to their nation and hazardous to themselves. They required no caves, or secret places of temples, from which to utter their messages; and those who consulted them were not practised upon by the bewildering ceremonies imposed upon inquirers at Delphos. They prophesied in streets, and courts, and palaces, and in the midst of large assemblies. Their predictions had a clear, determinate, and consistent sense; and they described future events with so many particularities of time and place, as made it scarcely possible that they should be misunderstood or misapplied.

Pure and elevated as was the character of the Jewish prophets, the hardihood of infidelity has attempted to asperse their character; because it appears from Scripture story, that there were false prophets and bad men who bore that name.

Balaam is instanced, though not a Jewish prophet; but that he was always a bad man, wants proof. The probability is, that his virtue was overcome by the offers of Balak; and the prophetic spirit was not taken away from him, because there was an evident design on the part of God to make his favour to Israel more conspicuous, by obliging a reluctant prophet to bless, when he would have cursed, and that in the very presence of a hostile king. When that work was done, Balaam was consigned to his propor punishment.

With respect to the Jewish false prophets, it is a singular proceeding to condemn the true ones for their sake, and to argue that because bad men assumed their functions, and imitated their manner, for corrupt purposes, the universally-received prophets of the nation,—men who, from the proofs they gave of their inspiration, had their commission acknowledged even by those who hated them, and their writings received into the Jewish canon,—were bad men also. Let the characters of Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Nathan, Isaiah, Jeremiah, (7)

(7) A weak attempt has been made by some infidel writers to fasten a charge

Daniel, and the authors of the other prophetical books, be considered; and how true are the words of the apostle, that they were "HOLY *men of old*," as well as that they were "*moved by the Holy Ghost!*" That the prophets who prophesied "*smooth things*" were never considered as true prophets, except for a time by a few who wished to have their hopes flattered, is plain from this—none of their writings were preserved by the Jews. Their predictions would not abound in reproofs and threatenings, like those of Isaiah and Jeremiah; and yet the words of those prophets, who were personally most displeasing to the Jews of the age in which they lived, have been preserved, while every flattering prophecy was suffered to fall into oblivion almost as soon as it was uttered. Can we have a more decisive proof than this, that the false prophets were a perfectly distinct class of men,—the venal imitators of these "*holy men of old*," but who never gave, even to those most disposed to listen to their delusive prophecies, a satisfactory proof of their prophetic commission?

Attempts have been made to show that a few of the prophecies of Scripture have failed. The following are the principal instances:—

It has been said that a false promise was made to Abraham, when it was promised to him, that his descendants should possess the territory which lies between the Euphrates and the river of Egypt. But this objection is clearly made in ignorance of the Scriptures; for the fact is, that David conquered that territory, and that the dominions of Solomon were thus extended. (*Vide* 2 Sam. viii; 1 Chron. xviii.)

Voltaire objects, that the prophets made promises to the Jews of the most unbounded riches, dominion, and influence; insomuch that they could only have been accomplished by their conquering or proselyting the entire of the habitable globe. On the contrary, he says, they have lost their possessions instead of obtaining either property or power, and therefore the prophecies are false.

The case is here unfairly stated. The prophets never made such exaggerated promises. They predict many spiritual blessings to be bestowed in the times of Messiah, under figures drawn from worldly opulence and power, the figurative language of which no attentive reader can mistake. They also promise many civil advantages, but only conditionally on the obedience of the nation; and they speak in high terms of the state of the Jewish nation, upon its final restoration, for which objectors must wait before they can determine the predictions to be false. But did not Voltaire know, that the loss of their own country by the Jews, of which he speaks, was predicted in the clearest manner? and would he not have seen, had he not been blinded by his

of falsehood on Jeremiah, in the case of his confidential interview with King Zedekiah. A satisfactory refutation is given by Bishop WATSON in his answer to Paine, Let. vi.

prejudices, that his very objection acknowledges the truth of prophecy? The promises of the prophets have not been falsified in the instance given, but their threats have been signally fulfilled.

Paine, following preceding writers of the same sentiments, asserts the prophecy of Isaiah to Ahaz not to have been verified by the event, and is thus answered by Bishop Watson: (*Apology*, letter v:) "The prophecy is quoted by you, to prove, and it is the only instance you produce, that Isaiah was 'a lying prophet and impostor.' Now I maintain, that this very instance proves that he was a true prophet and no impostor. The history of the prophecy, as delivered in the seventh chapter, is this,—Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, made war upon Ahaz king of Judah; not merely, or, perhaps, not at all for the sake of plunder, or the conquest of territory, but with a declared purpose of making an entire revolution in the government of Judah, of destroying the royal house of David, and of placing another family on the throne. Their purpose is thus expressed—'Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.' Now what did the Lord commission Isaiah to say to Ahaz? Did he commission him to say, The kings shall not vex thee? No.—The kings shall not conquer thee? No.—The kings shall not succeed against thee? No. He commissioned him to say—'It (the purpose of the two kings) shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.' I demand—Did it stand, did it come to pass? Was any revolution effected? Was the royal house of David dethroned and destroyed? Was Tabeal ever made king of Judah? No. The prophecy was perfectly accomplished. You say, 'Instead of these two kings failing in their attempt against Ahaz, they succeeded: Ahaz was defeated and destroyed.' I deny the fact: Ahaz was defeated but not destroyed; and even the 'two hundred thousand women, and sons and daughters,' whom you represent as carried into captivity, were not carried into captivity: they were made captives, but they were not carried into captivity; for the chief men of Samaria, being admonished by a prophet, would not suffer Pekah to bring the captives into the land,—'The rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, (some humanity, you see, among those Israelites, whom you every where represent as barbarous brutes,) and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren,' 2 Chron. xxviii, 15. The kings did fail in their attempt: their attempt was to destroy the house of David, and to make a revolution: but they made no revolution; they did not destroy the house of David, for Ahaz slept with his fathers; and Hezekiah, his son, of the house of David, reigned in his stead."

A similar attempt is made by the same writer to fix a charge of false

vaticination upon Jeremiah, and is thus answered by the bishop of Llandaff: "'In the thirty-fourth chapter is a prophecy of Jeremiah to Zedekiah, in these words, verse 2, *Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will burn it with fire; and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but thou shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand! and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah: thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee, and will lament thee, saying, Ah, lord! for I have pronounced the word saith the Lord.*—Now, instead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the king of Babylon, and speaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying in peace, and with the burnings of odours at the funeral of his fathers, (as Jeremiah hath declared the Lord himself had pronounced,) the reverse, according to the fifty-second chapter. was the case: it is there stated, (verse 10,) *That the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.* What can we say of these prophets, but that they are impostors and liars?' I can say this—that the prophecy you have produced was fulfilled in all its parts; and what then shall be said of those who call Jeremiah a liar and an impostor? Here then we are fairly at issue—you affirm that the prophecy was not fulfilled, and I affirm that it was fulfilled in all its parts. 'I will give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire:' so says the prophet. What says the history? 'They (the forces of the king of Babylon) burnt the house of God, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire,' 2 Chron. xxxvi, 19.—'Thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but thou shalt surely be *taken* and *delivered* into his hand:' so says the prophet. What says the history? 'The men of war fled by night, and the king went the way toward the plain, and the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army were scattered from him: so they *took* the king, and *brought him up to the king of Babylon*, to Riblah' 2 Kings xxv, 5. The prophet goes on, 'Thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth.' No pleasant circumstance this to Zedekiah, who had provoked the king of Babylon by revolting from him. The history says, 'The king of Babylon gave judgment upon Zedekiah,' or, as it is more literally rendered from the Hebrew, '*spake judgments with him* at Riblah.' The prophet concludes this part with, 'And thou shalt go to Babylon:' the history says, 'The king of Babylon bound him in chains, and

carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death, Jer. lii, 11.—'Thou shalt not die by the sword.' He did not die by the sword, he did not fall in battle.—'But thou shalt die in peace.' He did die in peace, he neither expired on the rack nor on the scaffold; was neither strangled nor poisoned, no unusual fate of captive kings; he died peaceably in his bed, though that bed was in a prison.—'And with the burnings of thy fathers shall they burn odours before thee.' I cannot prove from the history that this part of the prophecy was accomplished, nor can you prove that it was not. The probability is, that it was accomplished; and I have two reasons on which I ground this probability. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to say nothing of other Jews, were men of great authority in the court of the king of Babylon, before and after the commencement of the imprisonment of Zedekiah; and Daniel continued in power till the subversion of the kingdom of Babylon by Cyrus. Now it seems to me to be very probable, that Daniel and the other great men of the Jews, would both have inclination to request, and influence enough with the king of Babylon to obtain permission to bury their deceased prince Zedekiah, after the manner of his fathers. But if there had been no Jews at Babylon of consequence enough to make such a request, still it is probable that the king of Babylon would have ordered the Jews to bury and lament their departed prince, after the manner of their country. Monarchs, like other men, are conscious of the instability of human condition; and when the pomp of war has ceased, when the insolence of conquest is abated, and the fury of resentment is subsided, they seldom fail to revere royalty even in its ruins, and grant, without reluctance, proper obsequies to the remains of captive kings."

Ezekiel is assaulted in the same manner. "You quote," says the same writer, "a passage from Ezekiel, in the twenty-ninth chapter, where speaking of Egypt, it is said—'*No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years:*' this, you say, 'never came to pass, and consequently it is false, as all the books I have already reviewed are.' Now that the invasion predicted did come to pass, we have, as Bishop Newton observes, 'the testimonies of Megasthenes and Berosus, two heathen historians, who lived about 300 years before Christ; one of whom affirms, expressly, that Nebuchadnezzar conquered the greater part of Africa; and the other affirms it in effect, in saying, that when Nebuchadnezzar heard of the death of his father, having settled his affairs in *Egypt*, and committed the *captives* whom he took in Egypt to the care of some of his friends to bring them after him, he hasted directly to Babylon. And if we had been possessed of no testimony in support of the prophecy, it would have been a hasty conclusion, that the prophecy never came to pass; the history of Egypt, at so remote a period, being no

where accurately and circumstantially related. I admit that no period can be pointed out from the age of Ezekiel to the present, in which there was no foot of man or beast to be seen for forty years in all Egypt; but some think that only a part of Egypt is here spoken of; (8) and surely you do not expect a literal accomplishment of a hyperbolical expression, denoting great desolation; importing that the trade of Egypt which was carried on then, as at present, by caravans, by the foot of man and beast, should be annihilated."

To this we may add, that the passage respecting the depopulation of Egypt stands in the midst of an extended prophecy, which has received the most marked fulfilment, and illustrates, perhaps as strikingly as any thing which can be adduced, the cavilling spirit of infidelity, and proves that truth could never be the object of discussions thus conducted. Here is a passage which has some obscurity hanging over it. No one however can prove that it was not accomplished, even so fully that the expressions might be used without violent hyperbole; for the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar was one of the same sweeping and devastating character as his invasion and conquest of Judea: and we know that the greater part of the inhabitants of that country were destroyed, or led captive, and that the land generally remained untilled for seventy years, though not absolutely left without inhabitant. In the common language of men, Judea might be said not to be inhabited, so prodigious was the excision of its people; and in such circumstances, from the total cessation of all former intercourse, commercial and otherwise, between the different parts of the kingdom, it might also, without exaggeration, be said, that the foot of man and beast did not "*pass* THROUGH *it*;" their going from one part to another on business, or for worship at Jerusalem, being wholly suspended. Now, as we have no reason to suppose the Babylonian monarch to have been more merciful to Egypt than to Judea, the same expressions in a popular sense might be used in respect of that country. Here however infidelity thought a cavil might be raised, and totally—may we not say *wilfully?*—overlooked a prediction immediately following, which no human sagacity could conjecture, and against which it is in vain to urge, that it was written after the event: for the accomplishment of the prophecy runs on to the present day, and is as palpable and obvious as the past history, and the present political state of that country—"*Egypt shall be the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it*

(8) The opinion of the bishop, that not the whole of what is now called Egypt was intended in the prophecy, seems to derive confirmation from the following passages in Richardson's Travels in Egypt in 1817:—"The Delta, according to the tradition of the Jonians, is the only part that is, strictly speaking, entitled to be called Egypt, which is hieroglyphically represented by the figure of a heart, no unapt similitude."—"The principal places mentioned in our sacred writings, Zoan, Noph, and Tophanes, are all referable to the Delta. Probably little of them remains."

exalt itself any more above the nations—there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." (*Vide* Ezek. xxix and xxx.) It is more than two thousand years since the prophecy was delivered, and Egypt has never recovered its liberties, but is to this day under the yoke of foreigners. It was conquered by the Babylonians; then by the Persians; and in succession passed under the dominion of the Macedonians, Romans, Saracens, Mamelucs, and Turks. No native prince of Egypt has ever restored his country to independence, and ascended the throne of his ancestors; and the descendants of the ancient Egyptians are to this hour in the basest and most oppressed condition. Yet in Egypt the human mind had made some of its earliest and most auspicious efforts. The stupendous monuments of art and power, the ruins of which lie piled upon the banks of the Nile, or still defy the wastes of time, attest the vastness of the designs, and the extent of the power of its princes. Egypt, too, was possessed of great natural advantages. Its situation was singularly calculated to protect it against foreign invasion; while its great fertility promised to secure the country it enriched from poverty, baseness, and subjection. Yet after a long course of grandeur, and in contradiction to its natural advantages, Ezekiel pronounced that the kingdom should be "*the basest of all kingdoms*," and that there should be "*no more a prince of the land of Egypt.*" So the event has been and so it remains; and that this wonderful prophecy should be passed over by infidels in silence, while they select from it a passage which promised to give some colour to objection, is deeply characteristic of the state of their minds. It is not from deficiency of evidence that the word of God is rejected by them. The evil is not the want of light, but the love of darkness.

Much ridicule has been cast upon the prophets for those significant actions by which they illustrated their predictions; as when Jeremiah hides his linen girdle in a hole of the rock, and breaks a potter's vessel in the sight of the people; when Ezekiel weighs the hair of his head and beard in balances, with many other instances familiar to those who read the Scriptures. But this ridicule can only proceed from ignorance. In the early ages of the world, the deficiency of language was often supplied by signs; and when language was improved, "the practice remained," says Bishop Warburton, "after the necessity was over: especially among the easterns, whose natural temperament inclined them to this mode of conversation. The charges then of absurdity and fanaticism brought against the prophets, vanish of themselves. The *absurdity* of an action consists in its being extravagant and insignificative; but use and a fixed application made the actions in question both sober and pertinent. The *fanaticism* of an action consists in fondness for such actions as are unusual, and for foreign modes of speech; but those of the prophets were idiomatic and familiar." We may add, that several

of these actions were performed in vision; and that, considering the genius of the people who were addressed, they were calculated strongly to excite their attention, the end for which they were adopted.

Such are the principal objections which have been made to Scripture prophecy, as the proof of Scripture truth. That they are so few and so feeble, when enemies so prying and capable have employed themselves with so much misplaced zeal to discover any vulnerable part, is the triumph of truth. Their futility has been pointed out; and the whole weight of the preceding evidence in favour of the truth of the Old and New Testaments, remains unmoved. We have, indeed, but glanced at a few of these extraordinary revelations of the future, for the sake, not of exhibiting the evidence of prophecy, which would require a distinct volume, but of explaining its nature and pointing out its force. To the prophecies of the Old Testament, the attentive inquirer will add those of our Lord and his apostles, which will appear not less extraordinary in themselves, nor less illustrious in their fulfilment, so far as they have received their accomplishment. Many prophecies both of the Old and New Testament evidently point to future times, and this kind of evidence will consequently accumulate with the lapse of ages, and may be among the means by which Jews, Mohammedans, and pagans shall be turned to the Christian faith. At all events, prophecy even unfulfilled now answers an important end. It opens our prospect into the future and if the detail is obscure, yet, notwithstanding the mighty contest which is still going on between opposing powers and principles, we see how the struggle will terminate, and know, to use a prophetic phrase, that "*at eventime it shall be light.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE *of the Truth of Scripture*—COLLATERAL EVIDENCE.

THE internal evidence of a revelation from God has been stated to be that which arises from the apparent excellence and beneficial tendency of the doctrine. (*Vide* chap. ix.) This at least is its chief characteristic, though other particulars may also be included in this species of proof, and shall be adduced.

The reader will recollect the distinction made in the chapter just referred to, between *rational* and *authenticating* evidence. It has been observed, that there are some truths made known to us through the medium of a revelation from God, which, though in their nature undiscoverable by the unassisted faculties of man, yet, when once revealed, carry to our reason, *so far* as they are of a nature to be comprehended by it, the demonstration which accompanies truth of any other kind

(*Vide* chap. IX.) But it is only within the limit just mentioned that this position holds good; for such truths only must be understood as are accompanied with reasons or rational proofs in the revelation itself, or which, when once suggested to the mind, directs its thoughts and observations to surrounding facts and circumstances, or to established truths to which they are capable of being compared, and by which they are confirmed. The internal evidence of the Holy Scriptures, therefore, as far as *doctrine* is concerned, is restrained to truths of this class. Of other truths revealed to us in the Bible, and those in many instances fundamental to the system of Christianity, we have no proof of this kind; but they stand on the firm basis of Divine attestation, and suffer no diminution of their *authority* because the reasons of them are either hidden from us for purposes of moral discipline, or because they transcend our faculties. If we had the reasons of them before us, they would not be more authentic, though to the understanding they would be more obvious. Such are the doctrines of a trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead; of the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ; of his Divine and eternal Sonship, &c. Such are many facts in the Divine government—as the permission of evil, and the long apparent abandonment of heathen nations—the unequal religious advantages afforded to individuals as well as nations—and many of the circumstances of our individual moral trial upon earth. Of the truth of these doctrines, and the fitness of these and many other facts, we have no internal evidence whatever; but a very large class of truths which are found in the revelations of Scripture, afford more or less of this kind of proof, and make their appeal to our reason as well as to our faith;—in other words, their reasonableness is such, that though the great demonstration does not rest upon that, it affords an additional argument why they should be thankfully received, and heartily credited.

The first and fundamental doctrine of Scripture is, the existence of God; the great and the sole First Cause of all things; eternal, self existent, present in all places, knowing all things; infinite in power and wisdom; and perfect in goodness, justice, holiness, and truth. That this view of the Divine Being, for which we are indebted to the Scriptures alone, presents itself with powerful rational demonstration to the mind of man, is illustriously shown by that astonishing change of opinion on this great subject which took place in pagan nations upon the promulgation of Christianity, and which in Europe continues to this day substantially unaltered. Not only those gross notions which prevailed among the vulgar, but the dark, uncertain, and contradictory researches of the philosophers of different schools have passed away; and the truth respecting God, stated in the majesty and simplicity of the Scriptures, has been, with few exceptions, universally received, and that among enlightened Deists themselves. These discoveries of revela-

tion have satisfied the human mind on this great and primary doctrine; and have given it a resting place which it never before found, and from which, if it ever departs, it finds no demonstration until it returns to the "marvellous light" into which revealed religion has introduced us. A class of ideas, the most elevated and sublime, and which the most profound minds in former times sought without success, have thus become familiar to the very peasants in Christian nations. Nothing can be a more striking proof of the appeal which the Scripture character of God makes to the unsophisticated reason of mankind. (9)

Of the state and condition of MAN as it is represented in our holy writings, the evidence from fact, and from the consciousness of our own bosoms, is very copious. What man is, in his relations to God his maker and governor, we had never discovered without revelation; but now this is made known, confirmatory fact crowds in on every side, and affords its evidence of the truth of the doctrine.

The Old and New Testaments agree in representing the human race as *actually* vicious, and capable, without moral check and control, of the greatest enormities; so that not only individual happiness, but social also, is constantly obstructed or endangered. To this the history of all ages bears witness, and present experience gives its testimony.—All the states of antiquity crumbled down, or were suddenly overwhelmed, by their own vices; and the general character and conduct of the people which composed them may be read in the works of their historians, poets, and satirists, which have been transmitted to our times. These, as to the Greeks and Romans, fully bear out the darkest colouring of their moral condition to be found in the well known first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Church at Rome, and other passages in his various epistles. To this day, the same representation depicts the condition of almost all pagan countries, and, in many respects too, some parts of Christendom, where the word of God has been hidden from the people, and its moral influence, consequently, has not been suffered to develope itself. In those countries also where that

(9) The Scripture character of the Divine Being is thus strikingly drawn out by Dr. A. Clarke in his note on Gen. i, 1 :—

"The eternal, independent, and self-existent Being. The Being whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motive or influence: he who is absolute in dominion; the most pure, most simple, and most spiritual of all essences: infinitely benevolent, beneficent, true, and holy: the cause of all being, the upholder of all things; infinitely happy, because infinitely good; and eternally self sufficient, needing nothing that he has made. Illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence: known fully only to himself, because an infinite mind can only be comprehended by itself. In a word, a Being who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived; and who, from his infinite goodness, can do nothing but what is eternally just, right, and kind."

corrective has been most carefully applied, though exalted beyond comparison in just, honourable, benevolent, and sober principles and habits, along with the frequent occurrence of numerous and gross actual crimes, the same appetites and passions may be seen in constant contest with the laws of the state; with the example of the virtuous; and the controlling influence of the word of God, preached by faithful ministers, taught as a part of the process of education, and spread through society by the multiplication of its copies since the invention of printing. The Holy Scriptures therefore characterize man only as he is actually found in all ages, and in all places to the utmost bounds of those geographical discoveries which have been made through the adventurous spirit of modern navigators.

But they not only assume men to be actually vicious, but vicious in consequence of a *moral taint* in their nature,—originally and inevitably so, but for those provisions of grace and means of sanctity of which they speak; and as this assumption is the basis of the whole scheme of moral restoration, through the once promised seed of the woman, and the now actually given JESUS, the SAVIOUR, so they constantly remind him that he is "*born in sin, and shapen in iniquity*," and that, being born of the flesh, "*he cannot please God.*" What is thus represented as *doctrine* appeals to our reason through the evidence of unquestionable *fact*. The *strong tendency* of man to crime cannot be denied. Civil penal laws are enacted for no other purpose than to repress it; they are multiplied in the most civilized states to shut out the evil in all those new directions toward which the multiplied relations of man, and his increased *power*, arising from increased *intelligence*, have given it its impulse. Every legal deed, with its seals and witnesses bears testimony to that *opinion* as to human nature which the experience of man has impressed on man; and history itself is a record chiefly of human guilt, because examples of crime have every where and at all times been much more frequent than examples of virtue. This tendency to evil, the Scriptures tell us, arises from "*the heart*,"—the nature and disposition of man; and it is not otherwise to be accounted for.—Some indeed have represented the corruption of the race, as the result of association and example; but if men were naturally inclined to good, and averse to evil, how is it that not a few individuals only, but the whole race have become evil by mutual association? This would be to make the weaker cause the more efficient, which is manifestly absurd. It is contrary too to the reason of the case, that the example and association of persons *naturally* well disposed, should produce any other effect than that of confirming and maturing their good dispositions; as it is the effect of example and association, among persons of similar tastes and of similar pursuits, to confirm and improve the habit which gives rise to them. As little plausibility is there in the opinion

which would account for this general corruption from bad education.—How, if man in all ages had been rightly affected in his moral inclinations, did a course of deleterious education commence? How, if commenced, came it, that what must have been so abhorrent to a virtuously disposed community was not arrested, and a better system of instruction introduced? But the fact itself may be denied, as the worst education inculcates a virtue above the general practice, and no course of education was ever adopted purposely to encourage immorality. In the Scriptures alone we find a cause assigned which accounts for the phenomenon, and we are bound therefore by the rules of philosophy itself to admit it. It is this, that man is by NATURE prone to evil; and as it would be highly unreasonable to suppose, that this disposition was implanted in him by his benevolent and holy Maker, we are equally bound in reason to admit the Scripture solution of the FALL of the human race from a higher and better state.

A third view of the condition of man contained in the Scriptures, is, that he is not only under the Divine authority, but that the government of heaven as to him is of a *mixed character;* that he is treated with severity and with kindness also; that considered both as corrupt in his nature and tendencies, and as in innumerable instances actually offending, he is placed under a rigidly *restraining* discipline, to meet his case in the first respect, and under correction and penal dispensation with relation to the latter. On the other hand, as he is an object beloved by the God he has offended; a being for whose pardon and recovery Divine mercy has made provision; moral ends are connected with these severities, and nature and providence as well as revelation are crowned with instances of Divine benevolence to the sinning race. The proof of these different relations of man to God, surrounds us in that admixture of good and evil, of indulgence and restraint, of felicity and misery, to which he is so manifestly subject. Life is felt in all ordinary circumstances to be a blessing; but it is short and uncertain, subject to diseases and accidents. Many enjoyments fall to the lot of men; yet with the majority they are attained by means of great and exhausting labours of the body or of the mind, through which the risks to health and life are greatly multiplied; or they are accompanied with so many disappointments, fears, and cares, that their number and their quality are greatly lessened. The globe itself, the residence of man, and upon whose fertility, seasons, exterior surface, and interior stratification so much of the external felicity of man depends. bears marks of a mingled kind of just and merciful government suited to such a being as man in the state described in the Scriptures, and to none else. It cannot be supposed, that if inhabited by a race of beings perfectly holy and in the full enjoyment of the Divine favour. this earth would be subject to destructive earthquakes, volcanoes, and inundations; to blights and dearths, the harbin-

gers of famine; to those changes in the atmosphere which induce wide-wasting epidemic disorders; to that general sterility of soil which renders labour necessary to such a degree, as fully to occupy the time of the majority of mankind, prevent them from engaging in pursuits worthy an intellectual nature, and wear down their spirits; nor that the metals so necessary for man in civilized life, and, in many countries, the material of the fire by which cold must be repelled, food prepared, and the most important arts executed, should be hidden deep in the bowels of the earth, so that a great body of men must be doomed to the dangerous and humbling labour of raising them! These and many other instances (1) show a course of discipline very incongruous with the most enlightened views of the Divine character, if man be considered as an innocent being. On the contrary, that he is under an unmixed *penal* administration, is contradicted by the facts, that the earth yet yields her increase ordinarily to industry; that the destructive convulsions of nature are but occasional; and that, generally, the health of the human race predominates over sickness, and their animal enjoyments over positive misery. To those *diverse* relations of man to God, as stated in the Bible, the *contrarieties* of nature and providence bear an exact adaptation. Assume man to be any thing else than what is represented in Scripture, they would be discordant and inexplicable; in this view they harmonize. Man is neither *innocent* nor *finally condemned*—he is fallen and guilty, but not excluded from the compassion and care and benignity of his God.

The next leading doctrine of Christianity is the restoration of man to the Divine favour, through the merits of THE VICARIOUS AND SACRIFICIAL DEATH OF CHRIST, the incarnate Son of God. To this many objections have been offered; but, on the other hand, many important reasons for such a procedure have been overlooked. The rational evidence of this doctrine, we grant, is partial and limited; but it will be recollected, that it has been already proved, that the *authority* and truth of a doctrine are not thereby affected. It is indeed not unreasonable to suppose, that the evidence of the fitness and necessity of such a doctrine should be to us obscure. "The reason of the thing," says Bishop Butler, "and the whole analogy of nature should teach us, not to expect to have the like information concerning the Divine *conduct*, as concerning our own *duty*." On whatever terms God had been pleased to offer forgiveness to his creatures, if any other had been morally possible, it is not to be supposed that all the reasons of his conduct, which must of course respect the very principles of his government in general, extending not only to man, but to other beings, could have been explained,

(1) See the argument largely and ingeniously exhibited in GISBORNE'S Testimony of Nat. Theol. &c.

and certain it is, that those to whom the benefit was offered would have had no right to require it.

The Christian doctrine of atonement as a necessary merciful interposition, is grounded upon the liability of man to punishment in another life, for sins committed against the law of God in this; and against this view of the future prospects of mankind there can lie no objection of weight. Men are capable of committing sin, and sin is productive of misery and disorder. These positions cannot be denied. That to violate the laws of God and to despise his authority are not light crimes, is clear from considering them in their general effect upon society, and upon the world. Remove from the human race all the effects produced by vice, direct and indirect; all the inward and outward miseries and calamities which are entirely evitable by mankind, and which they wilfully bring upon themselves and others, and scarcely a sigh would be heaved, or a groan heard, except those extorted by natural evils, (small comparatively in number) throughout the whole earth. The great sum of human misery is the effect of actual offence; and as it is a principle in the wisest and most perfect human legislation to estimate the guilt of individual acts by their general tendency, and to proportion the punishment to them under that consideration, the same reason of the case is in favour of this principle, as found in Scripture; and thus considered, the demerit of the sins of an individual against God becomes incalculable. Nor is there any foundation to suppose, that the punishment assigned to sin by the judicial appointment of the Supreme Governor, is confined to the present life; for before we can determine that, we must be able to estimate the demerit of an act of wilful transgression in its principle, habits, and influence, which, *as parties implicated*, we are not in a state of feeling or judgment to attempt, were the subject more within our grasp. But the obvious reason of the case is in favour of the doctrine of future punishment; for not only is there an unequal administration of punishments in the present life, so that many eminent offenders pass through the present state without any visible manifestation of the Divine displeasure against their conduct, but there are strong and convincing proofs that we are placed in a state of trial, which continues *throughout life*, and the *result* of which can only be known, and consequently we ourselves can only become subjects of final reward or punishment, after existence in this world terminates. From the circumstances we have just enumerated to indicate the kind of government which is exercised over the human race, we must conclude, that, allowing the Supreme Governor to be wise and just, benevolent and holy, men are neither treated as innocent nor as incorrigibly corrupt. Now, what reason can possibly be given for this mixed kind of administration, but that the moral improvement of man is the object intended by it? The severity discountenances and restrains vice the annexation of

.nward felicity in all cases, (and outward in all those instances in which the result depends upon the conduct of the individual,) to holy habits and acts, recommends and sanctions them, and allures to the use of those means which God has provided for enabling us to form and practise them. No other final causes, it would appear, can be assigned for the peculiar manner in which we are governed in the present life; and if the deterring and correcting severity on the one hand, and the alluring and instructive kindness on the other, which mark the Divine administration, continue throughout life; if, in every period of his life here, man is capable, by the use of the prescribed means, of forming new habits and renouncing old ones, and thus of accomplishing the purposes of the moral discipline under which he is placed, then is he in a state of trial throughout life, and if so, he is accountable for the whole course of his life; and his ultimate reward or punishment must be in a state subsequent to the present.

It is also the doctrine of Scripture, that this future punishment of the incorrigible shall be *final* and *unlimited*; another consideration of great importance in considering the doctrine of *atonement*. This is a monitory doctrine which a revelation only could unfold; but being made, it has no inconsiderable degree of rational evidence. It supposes, it is true, that no future trial shall be allowed to man, the present having been neglected and abused; and to this there is much analogy in the constant procedures of the Divine government in the present life. When many checks and admonitions from the instructions of the wise and the examples of the froward, have been disregarded, poverty and sickness, infamy and death, ensue, in a thousand cases which the observation of every man will furnish; the trial of an individual, which is to issue in his present happiness or misery, is terminated; and so far from its being renewed frequently, in the hope of his finally profiting by a bitter experience, advantages, and opportunities, once thrown away, can never be recalled. There is nothing therefore contrary to the obvious principles of the Divine government as manifested in this life, in the doctrine which confines the space of man's highest and most solemn probation within certain limits, and beyond them cutting off all his hope. But let this subject be considered by the light thrown upon it by the circumstance, that the nature of man is *immortal*. With those who deny this to be the prerogative of the thinking principle in man, it would be trifling to hold this argument; but with those who do not, the consideration of the subject under this view is important.

The existence of man is never to cease. It follows then from this, that either the future trials to be allowed to those who in the present life have been incorrigible, are to be limited in number, or, should they successively fail, are to be repeated for ever. If the latter, there can be no ultimate judgment, no punishment or reward; and consequently

the Divine government as implying these, (and this we know it does, from what takes place in the present life,) must be *annihilated*. If this cannot be maintained, is there sufficient reason to conclude, that all to whom trial after trial is supposed to be afforded in new and varied circumstances, in order to multiply the probabilities, so to speak, of their final recovery from rebellion, will be at length reclaimed? Before this can be answered, it must be recollected, that a state of suffering which would compel obedience, if we should suppose mere suffering capable of producing this effect, or an exertion of *influence* upon the understanding and will which shall necessitate a definite choice, is neither of them to be assumed as entering into the circumstances of any new state of trial. Every such future trial, to be probationary at all, that is, in order to bring out the existence of a new moral principle, and by voluntary acts to *prove* it, must *substantially* be like the present, though its circumstances may vary. Vice must have its allurements; virtue must rise from self denial, and be led into the *arena* to struggle with difficulty; many present interests and pleasures must be seen in connection with vice; the rewards of obedience must, as now, be not only more refined than mere sense can be gratified with, but also distant: the mind must be capable of error in its moral estimate of things, through the influence of the senses and passions; and so circumstanced, that those erroneous views shall only be prevented or corrected by watchfulness, and a diligent application to meditation, prayer, and the use of those means of information on moral subjects which almighty God may have put within their reach. We have no right in this argument to imagine to ourselves a future condition where the influence of every circumstance will be directed to render vice most difficult to commit, and virtue most difficult to avoid; for this would not be a state of *trial*: and if in this present life, men have obstinately resisted all admonitions from heaven; obdurated themselves against all the affecting displays of the Divine kindness, and the deterring manifestations of the Divine majesty; it is most reasonable to conclude, that a part of them at least would abuse successive trials, and frustrate their intention, by attachment to present and sensual gratification. What then is to become of them? If we admit a moral government of rational creatures at all, their probation cannot be eternal, for that leads to no result; if probation be appointed, it implies accountability, a judicial decision, and that judicial decision, in the case of the incorrigible, *punishment*. Whenever then the trial, or the series of trials, terminates as to these *immortal* beings, the subsequent punishment, of what kind soever it may be, must be *eternal*. This doctrine of Scripture rests therefore upon others, of which the rational evidence is abundant and convincing;—that almighty God exercises a moral government over his creatures; that the present life is a state of moral discipline and trial; and that man is *immortal*. If these are

allowed, the eternal duration of future punishments, as to the obstinately wicked, must follow; and its accordance with the principles just mentioned, is its rational evidence.

That atonement for the sins of men which was made by the death of Christ, is represented in the Christian system as the means by which mankind may be delivered from this awful catastrophe—from judicial inflictions of the displeasure of a Governor, whose authority has been contemned, and whose will has been resisted, which shall know no mitigation in their degree, nor bound to their duration; and if an *end*, supremely great and benevolent, can commend any procedure to us, the Scriptural doctrine of atonement commends this kind of appeal to our attention. This end it professes to accomplish, by means which, with respect to the Supreme Governor himself, preserve his character from mistake, and maintain the authority of his government; and with respect to man, give him the strongest possible reason for hope, and render more favourable the circumstances of his earthly probation. These are considerations which so manifestly show, from its own internal constitution, the superlative importance and excellence of Christianity, that it would be exceedingly criminal to overlook them.

How sin may be forgiven without leading to such misconceptions of the Divine character as would encourage disobedience, and thereby weaken the influence of the Divine government, must be considered as a problem of very difficult solution. A government which admitted no forgiveness, would sink the guilty to despair; a government which never punishes offence, is a contradiction—it cannot exist. Not to punish, is to dissolve authority; to punish without mercy, is to destroy, and, where all are guilty, to make the destruction universal. That we cannot sin with impunity, is a matter determined. The Ruler of the world is not careless of the conduct of his creatures; for that penal consequences are attached to offence, is not a subject of argument, but is made evident from daily observation of the events and circumstances of the present life. It is a principle, therefore, already laid down, that the authority of God must be preserved; and it ought to be observed, that in that kind of administration which restrains evil by penalty, and encourages obedience by favour and hope, we and all moral creatures are the interested parties, and not the Divine Governor himself, whom, because of his independent and efficient nature, our transgressions cannot injure. The reasons therefore which compel him to maintain his authority, do not terminate in himself. If he becomes a party against offenders, it is for our sake, and for the sake of the moral order of the universe, to which sin, if encouraged by a negligent administration, and by entire or frequent impunity, would be the source of endless disorder and misery: and if the granting of pardon to offence be strongly and even severely guarded, we are to refer it to the moral necessity of the case as arising

out of the general welfare of accountable creatures, liable to the deep evil of sin, and not to any reluctance on the part of our Maker to forgive, much less to any thing vindictive in his nature,—charges which have been most inconsiderately and unfairly brought against the Christian doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings. If it then be true, that the relief of offending man from future punishment, and his restoration to the Divine favour, ought for the interests of mankind themselves, and for the instruction and caution of other beings, to be so bestowed, that no license shall be given to offence; that God himself, while he manifests his compassion, should not appear less just, less holy, than the maintenance of an efficient and even awful authority demands; that his *commands* shall be felt to be as compelling, and that disobedience shall as *truly*, though not so *unconditionally*, subject us to the deserved penalty, as though no hope of forgiveness had been exhibited, we ask, on what scheme, save that which is developed in the New Testament, these necessary conditions are provided for? Necessary they are, unless we contend for a *license* and an *impunity* which shall annul the efficient control of the universe, a point which no reasonable man will contend for; and if not, then he must allow an internal evidence of the truth of the doctrine of Scripture, which makes the offer of pardon consequent only upon the securities we have before mentioned. If it be said, that sin may be pardoned in the exercise of the Divine prerogative, the reply is, that if this prerogative were exercised toward a part of mankind only, the passing by of the others would be with difficulty reconciled to the Divine character; and if the benefit were extended to all, government would be at an end. This scheme of bringing men within the exercise of mercy, does not therefore meet the obvious difficulty of the case; nor is it improved by confining the act of grace only to *repentant* criminals. For in the immediate view of danger, what offender, surrounded with the wreck of former enjoyments, feeling the vanity of guilty pleasures, now past for ever, and beholding the approach of the delayed, but threatened, penal visitation, but would repent? Were this principle to regulate human governments, every criminal would escape, and judicial forms would become a subject for ridicule. Nor is it the principle which the Divine Being in his conduct to men in the present state acts upon, though in this world punishments are not final and absolute. Repentance does not restore health injured by intemperance, property wasted by profusion, or character once stained by dishonourable practices. If repentance alone can secure pardon, then all must be pardoned, and government dissolved, as in the case of forgiveness by the exercise of mere prerogative; if a selection be made, then different and discordant principles of government are introduced into the Divine administration, which is a derogatory supposition.

To avoid the force of these obvious difficulties, some have added

reformation to repentance, and would restrain forgiveness to those only, who to their penitence add a course of future obedience to the Divine law. In this opinion a concession of importance is made in favour of the doctrine of atonement as stated in the Scriptures. For we ask, why an act of grace should be thus restricted? Is not the only reason this, that every one sees, that to pardon offence either on mere prerogative, or on the condition of repentance, would annul every penalty, and consequently encourage vice? The principle assumed then is, that vice ought not to be encouraged by an unguarded exercise of the Divine mercy; that the authority of government ought to be upheld; that almighty God ought not to appear indifferent to human actions, nor otherwise than as a God "*hating iniquity*," and "*loving righteousness.*" Now precisely on these principles does the Christian doctrine of atonement rest. It carries them higher; it teaches that other means have been adopted to secure the object; but the ends proposed are the same; and thus to the *principle* on which that great doctrine rests, the objector can take no exception—that point he has surrendered, and must confine himself to a comparison of the efficiency of the respective modes, by which the purposes of moral government may be answered in the exercise of mercy to the guilty in his own system, and in that of Christianity. We shall not, in order to prove "*the wisdom*" as well as the grace of the doctrine of the Bible on this subject, press our opponent with the fact, important as it is, that in the light vouchsafed unto us into the rules of the government of God over men with reference to the present state merely, we see no reason to conclude any thing with *certainty* as to the efficacy of reformation. A change of conduct does not, any more than repentance, repair the mischiefs of former misconduct. Even the sobriety of the reformed man does not always restore health; and the industry and economy of the formerly negligent and wasteful, repair not the losses of extravagance. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon the consideration which this theory involves as to all the principles of government established among men, which in flagrant cases never suspend punishment in anticipation of a change of conduct; but which in the infliction of penalty look steadily to the crime actually committed, and to the necessity of vindicating the violated majesty of the laws. The argument might indeed be left here; but we go farther and show, that the reformation anticipated is ideal, because it is *impracticable.*

To make this clear it must be recollected, that they who oppose this theory of human reconciliation to God, to that of the Scriptures, leave out of it not only the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, but other important doctrines; and especially that agency of the Holy Spirit which awakens the thoughtless to consideration, and prompts and assists their efforts to attain a higher character, and to commence a new course of conduct. Man is therefore left, unassisted, and uninfluenced, to his own endeavours,

and in the peculiar, unalleviated circumstances of his actual moral state. What that state is, we have already seen. It has been argued that nothing can account for the practical corruption of mankind, but a moral taint in our hearts, a propensity of nature to evil and not to good; and that every other mode of accounting for the moral phenomena which the history of man and daily experience present, is inconclusive and contradictory How then is this supposed reformation to commence? We do not say, the exchange of one vice for another, that specious kind of reformation by which many are deceived, for the objector ought to have the credit of intending a reformation which implies love to the purity of the Divine commands; cordial respect for the authority of our Maker; and not partial, but universal obedience. But if the natural, unchecked disposition of the mind is to evil, and supernatural assistance be disallowed, "*who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*" To natural propension, we are also to add in this case, as *reformation* is the matter in question, the power of habit, proverbially difficult to break, though man is not in fact in the unassisted condition which the error now opposed supposes. The whole of this theory assumes human nature to be what it is not; and a delusive conclusion must, therefore, necessarily result. If man be totally corrupt, the only principles from which reformation can proceed do not exist in his nature; and if we allow no more than that the propensity to evil in him is stronger than the propensity to good, it is absurd to suppose, that in opposing propensities the weakest should resist the most powerful,—that the stream of the rivulet should force its way against the tides of the ocean. The *reformation*, therefore, which is to atone for his vices, is impracticable.

The question proposed abstractedly, How may mercy be extended to offending creatures, the subjects of the Divine government, without encouraging vice, by lowering the righteous and holy character of God, and the authority of his government, in the maintenance of which the whole universe of beings are interested? is therefore at once one of the most important and one of the most difficult which can employ the human mind. None of the theories which have been opposed to Christianity, afford a satisfactory solution of the problem. They assume principles either destructive to moral government, or which cannot, in the circumstances of man, be acted upon. The only answer is found in the Holy Scriptures. They alone show, and indeed they alone *profess* to show, how God may be *just*, and yet the *justifier* of the ungodly. Other schemes show how he may be merciful; but the difficulty does not lie there. This meets it, by declaring "*the righteousness of God*," at the same time that it proclaims his mercy. The voluntary sufferings of an incarnate, Divine person, "*for us*," in our room and stead, magnify the justice of God; display his hatred to sin; proclaim "*the exceeding sinfulness*" of transgression, by the deep and painful sufferings of the substitute, warn the

persevering offender of the terribleness as well as the certainty of his punishment; and open the gates of salvation to every penitent. It is a part of the same Divine plan to engage the influence of the Holy Spirit, to awaken that penitence, and to lead the wandering soul back to himself; to renew the fallen nature of man in righteousness, at the moment he is justified through faith, and to place him in circumstances in which he may henceforth "*walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*" *All the ends of government are here answered.* No license is given to offence; the moral law is unrepealed; the day of judgment is still appointed; future and eternal punishments still display their awful sanctions; a new and singular display of the awful purity of the Divine character is afforded; yet pardon is offered to all who seek it; and the whole world may be saved!

With such evidence of suitableness to the case of mankind; under such lofty views of connection with the principles and ends of moral government, does the doctrine of THE ATONEMENT present itself. But other important considerations are not wanting, to mark the united wisdom and goodness of that method of extending mercy to the guilty, which Christianity teaches us to have been actually and exclusively adopted. It is rendered indeed "*worthy of all acceptation,*" by the circumstance of its meeting the difficulties we have just dwelt upon,—difficulties which could not otherwise have failed to make a gloomy impression upon every offender awakened to a sense of his spiritual danger; but it must be very inattentively considered, if it does not farther commend itself to us, by not only removing the apprehensions we might feel as to the justice of the Divine Lawgiver, but as exalting him in our esteem as "*the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness,*" who surrendered his beloved Son to suffering and death, that the influence of moral goodness might not be weakened in the hearts of his creatures—as a God of love, affording in this instance a view of the tenderness and benignity of his nature infinitely more impressive and affecting than any abstract description could convey, or than any act of creating and providential power and grace could furnish, and therefore most suitable to subdue that enmity which had unnaturally grown up in the hearts of his creatures, and which, when corrupt, they so easily transfer from a law which restrains their inclination to the Lawgiver himself. If it be important to us to know the extent and reality of our danger, by the death of Christ it is displayed not in description, but in the most impressive action; if it be important that we should have assurance of the Divine placability toward us, it here received a demonstration incapable of greater certainty: if gratitude is the most powerful motive of future obedience, and one which renders command on the one part, and active service on the other, "*not grievous but joyous,*" the recollection of such obligations as the "*love of Christ*" has laid us under, is a perpetual spring to this energetic affection, and

will be the means of raising it to higher and more delightful activity for ever. All that can most powerfully illustrate the united tenderness and awful majesty of God, and the odiousness of sin; all that can win back the heart of man to his Maker and Lord, and render future obedience a matter of affection and delight as well as duty; all that can extinguish the angry and malignant passions of man to man; all that can inspire a mutual benevolence; and dispose to a self-denying charity for the benefit of others; all that can arouse by hope or tranquillize by faith, is to be found in the vicarious death of Christ, and the principles and purposes for which it was endured.

"Ancient history tells us of a certain king who made a law against adultery, in which it was enacted that the offender should be punished by the loss of both eyes. The very first offender was his own son. The case was most distressing; for the king was an affectionate father, as well as a just magistrate. After much deliberation and inward struggle, he finally commanded one of his own eyes to be pulled out and one of his son's. It is easier to conceive than to describe what must have been the feelings of the son in these most affecting circumstances. His offence would appear to him in a new light; it would appear to him, not simply as connected with painful consequences to himself, but as the cause of a father's sufferings, and as an injury to a father's love. If the king had passed over the law altogether, in his son's favour, he would have exhibited no regard for justice, and he would have given a very inferior proof of affection.

"If we suppose that the happiness of the young man's life depended on the eradication of this criminal propensity, it is not easy to imagine how the king could more wisely or more effectually have promoted this benevolent object. The action was not simply a correct representation of the king's character,—it also contained in itself an appeal most correctly adapted to the feelings of the criminal. It justified the king in the exercise of clemency; it tranquillized the son's mind, as being a pledge of the reality and sincerity of his father's gracious purposes toward him; and it identified the object of his esteem with the object of his gratitude. Mere gratitude, unattracted by an object of moral worth, could never have stamped an impression of moral worth on his character; which was his father's ultimate design. We might suppose the existence of this same character without its producing such an action; we might suppose a conflict of contending feelings to be carried on in the mind without evidencing, in the conduct flowing from it, the full vehemence of the conflict, or defining the adjustment of the contending feelings; but we cannot suppose any mode of conduct so admirably fitted to impress the stamp of the father's character on the mind of the son, or to associate the love of right and the abhorrence of wrong with the most powerful instincts of the heart. The old man not only wished to act in

perfect consistency with his own views of duty, but also to produce a salutary effect on the mind of his son; and it is the full and effectual union of these two objects which forms the most beautiful and striking part of this remarkable history.

"There is a singular resemblance between this moral exhibition, and the communication which God has been pleased to make of himself in the Gospel. We cannot but love and admire the character of this excellent prince, although we ourselves have no direct interest in it; and shall we refuse our love and admiration to the King and Father of the human race, who, with a kindness and condescension unutterable, has, in calling his wandering children to return to duty and to happiness, presented to each of us a like aspect of tenderness and purity, and made use of an argument which makes the most direct and irresistible appeal to the most familiar, and at the same time the most powerful principles in the heart of man?

"A pardon without a sacrifice, could have made but a weak and obscure appeal to the understanding or the heart. It could not have demonstrated the evil of sin; it could not have demonstrated the graciousness of God; and therefore it could not have led man either to hate sin or to love God. If the punishment as well as the criminality of sin consists in an opposition to the character of God, the fullest pardon must be perfectly useless, while this opposition remains in the heart; and the substantial usefulness of the pardon will depend upon its being connected with such circumstances as may have a natural and powerful tendency to remove this opposition, and create a resemblance. The pardon of the Gospel is connected with such circumstances; for the sacrifice of Christ has associated sin with the blood of a benefactor, as well as with our own personal sufferings,—and obedience with the dying entreaty of a friend breathing out a tortured life for us, as well as with our own unending glory in his blessed society. This act, like that in the preceding illustration, justifies God as a lawgiver in dispensing mercy to the guilty; it gives a pledge of the sincerity and reality of that mercy; and, by associating principle with mercy, it identifies the object of gratitude with the object of esteem, in the heart of the sinner." (2)

Inseparably connected with the great doctrine of atonement, and

(2) "Remarks on the Internal Evidence of the Truth of Revealed Religion, by Thomas Erskine, Esq."—This popular and interesting volume contains many very striking, just, and eloquent remarks in illustration of the internal evidence of several doctrines of the New Testament, and especially of that of the atonement. It is to be regretted, however, that it sets out from a false principle, and builds so much truth upon the sand. "The sense of moral obligation is the standard to which reason instructs man to adjust his system of *natural religion*," and this is "the test by which he is to try all pretensions to religion." The principle of the book therefore is to show the excellence of Christianity from its embodying the abstract principles of natural religion in intelligible and palpable action—a gratuitous and unsubstantial foundation.

adapted to the new circumstances of trial in which the human race was placed in consequence of the lapse of our first parents, is the doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit; and this, though supposed by many to be farthest removed from rational evidence, can neither be opposed by any satisfactory argument, nor is without an obvious reasonableness.

The Scriptures represent man in the present state as subject not only to various sensible excitements to transgression; and as influenced to resist temptation by the knowledge of the law of God and its sanctions, by his own sense of right and duty, and by the examples of the evils of offence which surround him; but also as solicited to obedience by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and to persevering rebellion by the seductions of evil spirits.

This is the doctrine of revelation, and if the evidences of that revelation can be disproved, it may be rejected; if not, it must be admitted, whether any argumentative proof can be offered in its favour or not. That it is not *unreasonable*, may be first established.

That God, who made us, and who is a pure Spirit, cannot have immediate access to our thoughts, our affections, and our will, it would certainly be much more unreasonable to deny than to admit; and if the great and universal Spirit possesses this power, every *physical* objection at least to the doctrine in question is removed, and finite unbodied spirits may have the same *kind* of access to the mind of man, though not in so perfect and intimate a *degree*. Before any natural impossibility can be urged against this intercourse of spirit with spirit, we must know what no philosopher, however deep his researches into the causes of the phenomena of the mind, has ever professed to know—the laws of perception, memory, and association. We can suggest thoughts and reasons to each other, and thus mutually influence our wills and affections. We employ for this purpose the *media* of signs and words; but to contend, that these are the only *media* through which thought can be conveyed to thought, or that spiritual beings cannot produce the same effects *immediately*, is to found an objection wholly upon our ignorance. All the reason which the case, considered in itself, affords, is certainly in favour of this opinion. *We* have access to each other's minds; *we* can suggest thoughts, raise affections, influence the wills of others; and analogy therefore favours the conclusion, that, though by different and latent means, unbodied spirits have the same access to each other, and to us.

If no physical impossibility lies against this representation of the circumstances of our probation, no *moral* reason certainly can be urged against the principle itself, which makes us liable to the contrary solicitations of other beings. That God our heavenly Father should be solicitous for our welfare, is surely to be admitted; and that there may be invisible beings who are anxious, from various motives, some of

which may be conceived, and others are unknown, to entice us to evil, is made probable by this, that among men, every vicious character seeks a fellowship in his vices, and employs various arts of seduction, even when he has no interest in success, that he may not be left to sin alone. In point of fact, we see this principle of moral trial in constant operation with respect to our fellow creatures. Who is not counselled, and warned, and entreated by the good? Who is not invited to offence by the wicked? What are all the instructive, enlightening, and influential institutions which good and benevolent men establish and conduct, but means by which others may be drawn and influenced to what is right? and what are all the establishments and devices to multiply the gratifications and pleasures of mankind, but means employed by others to encourage religious trifling, and indifference to things devout and spiritual, and often to seduce to vice in its grossest forms? The principle is therefore in manifest operation, and he who would except to this doctrine of Scripture, must also except to the Divine government, as it is manifested in the facts of experience, and which clearly makes it a circumstance of our probation in this world, that our opinions, affections, and wills should be subject to the influence of others, both for good and evil.

By reference to this fact, we may also show the futility of the objection to the doctrine of supernatural influence, which is drawn from the free agency of man. The Scriptures do not teach that supernatural influence, either good or bad, destroys our freedom and accountability. How then, it is asked, is the one to be reconciled with the other? The answer is, that we are sure they are not incompatible, because, though we may be strongly influenced and solicited to good or evil conduct by virtuous or vicious persons; though they may enforce their respective wishes by arguments, or persuasions, or hopes, or fears; though they may carefully lead us into circumstances which may be most calculated to undermine or to corroborate virtuous resolutions; we are yet conscious that we are at liberty either to yield or to resist; and on this consciousness, equally common to all, is founded that common judgment of the conduct of those, who, though carefully well advised, or assiduously seduced, are always treated as free agents in public opinion, and praised or censured accordingly. The case is the same where the influence is supernatural, only the manner in which it is applied is different. In one it operates upon the springs which most powerfully move the will and affections from *without*, in the other it is more immediately from *within*; but in neither case is it to be supposed that any other beings can will or choose for us. The *modus operandi* in both cases may be inexplicable; but while the power of influencing our choice may belong to others, the power of choosing is exclusively and necessarily our own.

Since therefore no reason physical or moral can be urged against the

doctrine of Divine influence; since the principle on which it is founded, as a circumstance in our trial on earth, is found to accord entirely with the actual arrangements of the Divine government in other cases, every thing is removed which might obstruct our view of the excellence of this encouraging tenet of Divine revelation. The moral helplessness of man has been universally felt, and universally acknowledged. To see the good and to follow the evil, has been the complaint of all; and precisely to such a state is the doctrine of Divine influence adapted. As the atonement of Christ stoops to the *judicial destitution* of man, the promise of the Holy Spirit meets the case of his *moral destitution*. One finds him without any means of satisfying the claims of justice, so as to exempt him from punishment; the other, without the inclination or the strength to avail himself even of proclaimed clemency, and offered pardon, and becomes the means of awakening his judgment, and exciting, and assisting, and crowning his efforts to obtain that boon, and its consequent blessings. The one relieves him from the penalty, the other from the disease of sin; the former restores to man the favour of God, the other renews him in his image.

To this eminent *adaptation* of the doctrine to the condition of man, we may add the affecting view which it unfolds of the Divine character. That tenderness and compassion of God to his offending creatures; that reluctance that they should perish; that Divine and sympathizing anxiety, so to speak, to accomplish their salvation, which were displayed by "*the cross of Christ*," are here in continued and active manifestation. A Divine Agent is seen "*seeking*," in order that he may save, "*that which is lost*;" following the "*lost sheep into the wilderness*," that he may "*bring it home rejoicing*;" delighting to testify of Christ, because of the *salvation* he has procured; to accompany with his influence written revelation, because that alone contains "*words by which men may be saved*;" affording special assistance to ministers, because they are the messengers of God proclaiming *peace*; and, in a word, knocking at the door of human hearts; arousing the conscience; calling forth spiritual desires; opening the eyes of the mind more clearly to discern the meaning and application of the revealed word; and mollifying the heart to receive its effectual impression:—doing this too without respect of persons, and making it his special office and work to convince the mistaken; to awaken the indifferent; to comfort the penitent and humble; to plant and foster and bring to maturity in the hearts of the obedient every grace and virtue. These are views of God which we could not have had but for this doctrine; and the obvious tendency of them is, to fill the heart with gratitude for a condescension so wonderful and a solicitude so tender; to impress us with a deep conviction of the value of renewed habits, since God himself stoops to work them in us; and to admonish us of the infinite importance of a personal experience of the

benefits of Christ's death, since the means of our pardon and sanctification *unapplied* can avail us nothing.

We may add, (and it is no feeble argument in favour of the excellence of this branch of Christian doctrine,) that we are thereby encouraged to aspire after a loftier character of moral purity, and a more perfect state of virtue; as well as to engage in more difficult duties. Were we left wholly to our own resources, we should despair; and perhaps it is exactly in proportion to the degree in which this promise of the Holy Spirit is apprehended by those who truly receive Christianity, that they advance the standard of possible moral attainment. That God should "*work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure*," is a reason why we should "*work out our own salvation with fear and trembling*;" for as our freedom is not destroyed, as even the Spirit may be "*grieved*" and "*quenched*," our fall would be unspeakably aggravated by our advantages. But the operation of God within us is also a motive to the working our salvation "*out*,"—to the *perfecting* of our sanctification even to eternal life. None can despair of conquering any evil habit, who steadily look to this great doctrine, and cordially embrace it; none can despair of being fully renewed again in the image of God, when they know that it is one of the offices of the Holy Spirit to effect this renovation; and none who habitually rest upon the promise of God for all that assistance which the written word warrants them to expect in difficult and painful duties, and in those generous enterprises for the benefit of others which a hallowed zeal may lead them to engage in, will be discouraged in either. "*In the name of God*," such persons have in all ages "*lifted up their banners*," and have thus been elevated into a decision, a boldness, an enterprise, a perseverance, which no other consideration or trust could inspire. Such are the practical effects of this doctrine. prompts to attainments in inward sanctity and outward virtue, which would have been chimerical to consider possible, but for the aid of a Divine influence; and it leads to exertion for the benefit of others, the success of which would otherwise be too doubtful to encourage the undertaking.

It would be easy to adduce many other doctrines of our religion, which, from their obvious excellency and correspondence with the experience and circumstances of mankind, furnish much interesting internal evidence in favour of its Divinity; but as this would greatly exceed the limits of a chapter, and as those doctrines have been considered against which the most strenuous objections from pretended rational principles have been urged; the moral state and condition of man; the atonement made by the death of Christ for the sins of the world; and the influences of the Holy Spirit,—it may have been sufficient for the argument to have shown that even such doctrines are accompanied with important and interesting *reasons*; and that they

powerfully commend Christianity to universal acceptance. What has been said is to be considered only as a specimen of the rational proof which accompanies many of the doctrines of revelation, and which a considerate mind may with ease enlarge by numerous other instances drawn from its precepts, its promises, and those future and ennobling hopes which it sets before us. The *wonderful agreement* in doctrine among the writers of the numerous books of which the Bible is composed, who lived in ages very distant from each other, and wrote under circumstances as varied as can well be conceived, may properly close this part of the internal evidence. "In all the bearings, parts, and designs of the book of God, we shall find a most striking harmony, fitness, and adaptation of its component parts to one beautiful, stupendous, and united whole; and that all its parts unite and terminate in a most magnificent exhibition of the glory of God, the lustre of his attributes, the strict and true perfection of his moral government, the magnitude and extent of his grace and love, especially as manifested in the salvation and happiness of man, in his recovery from moral pravity, and restoration to a capacity of acquiring happiness eternal." (LLOYD'S *Horæ Theologicæ*.) This argument is so justly and forcibly expressed in the following quotation, as to need no farther elucidation:—

"The sacred volume is composed by a vast variety of writers, men of every different rank and condition, of every diversity of character and turn of mind; the monarch and the plebeian, the illiterate and learned, the foremost in talent and the moderately gifted in natural advantages, the historian and the legislator, the orator and the poet,—each has his peculiar province; '*some prophets, some apostles, some evangelists*,' living in ages remote from each other, under different modes of civil government, under different dispensations of the Divine economy, filling a period of time which reached from the first dawn of heavenly light to its meridian radiance. The Old Testament and the New, the law and the Gospel; the prophets predicting events, and the evangelists recording them; the doctrinal yet didactic epistolary writers, and he who closed the sacred canon in the Apocalyptic vision;—all these furnished their respective portions, and yet all tally with a dove-tailed correspondence; all the different materials are joined with a completeness the most satisfactory, with an agreement the most incontrovertible.

"This instance of uniformity without design, of agreement without contrivance; this consistency maintained through a long series of ages, without a possibility of the ordinary methods for conducting such a plan; these unparalleled congruities, these unexampled coincidences, form altogether a species of evidence, of which there is no other instance in the history of all the other books in the world.

"All these variously gifted writers here enumerated, concur in this grand peculiarity—that all have the same end in view, all are pointing

to the same object; all, without any projected collusion, are advancing the same scheme; each brings in his several contingent without any apparent consideration how it may unite with the portions brought by other contributors, without any spirit of accommodation, without any visible intention to make out a case, without indeed any actual resemblance. more than that every separate portion being derived from the same spring, each must be governed by one common principle, and that principle being truth itself, must naturally and consentaneously produce assimilation, conformity, agreement. What can we conclude from all this, but what is indeed the inevitable conclusion,—a conclusion which forces itself on the mind, and compels the submission of the understanding;—that all this, under differences of administration, is the work of one and the same great *omniscient and eternal Spirit!*" (Mrs. More's *Character of St. Paul.*)

The second branch of the internal evidence of the Scriptures consists of their *moral tendency;* and here, as in doctrine, the believer may take the highest and most commanding ground.

If, as to the truths revealed in them, the before "*unknown God*," unknown even to the philosophers of Athens, has been "declared" unto us; if the true moral condition, dangers, and hopes of man have been revealed; if the "*kindness and good will of God our Saviour unto man*" has appeared; if the true propitiation has been disclosed, and the gates of salvation opened; if, through the promised influences of the Holy Spirit, the renewal of our natures in the image of God originally borne by man, the image of his holiness, is made possible to all who seek it; if we have, in the consentaneous system of doctrine which we find in the Scriptures, every moral direction which can safely guide, every promise which can convey a blessing suitable to our condition, and every hope which can at once support under suffering, and animate us to go through our course of trial, and aspire to the high rewards of another life; the moral influence of such a system is as powerful as its revelations of doctrine are lofty and important.

One of the most flagrant instances of that malignity of heart with which some infidel writers have assailed the Scriptures, and which, more than any thing, shows that it is not the want of evidence, but a hostility arising from a less creditable source, which leads them, in the spirit of enmity and malice, wilfully to libel what they ought to adore,—is, that they have boldly asserted the Bible to have an immoral tendency. For this, the chief proof which they pretend to offer is, that it records the failings and the vices of some of the leading characters in the Old and New Testaments.

The fact is not denied: but they suppress what is equally true, that these vices are never mentioned with approbation; that the characters stained with them are not, in those respects, held up to our imitation.

and that their frailties are recorded for admonition. They dwell upon the crimes of David, and sneer at his being called "*a man after God's own heart*:" but they suppress the fact, that he was so called long before the commission of those crimes; and that he was not at any time declared to be acceptable to God with reference to his private conduct as a man, but in respect of his public conduct as a king. Nor do they state, that these crimes are, in the same Scriptures, represented as being tremendously visited by the displeasure of the Almighty, both in the life of David, and in the future condition of his family. From such objectors the Bible can suffer nothing, because the injustice of their attacks implies a constrained homage to the force of truth. Even this very objection furnishes so strong an argument in favour of the sincerity and honesty of the sacred writers, that it confirms their credibility in that which unbelievers *deny*, as well as in those relations which they are glad, for a hostile purpose, to *admit*. Had the Scriptures been written by cunning impostors, such acknowledgments of crimes and frailties in their most distinguished characters, and in some of the writers themselves, would not have been made.

"The evangelists all agree in this most unequivocal character of veracity, that of criminating themselves. They record their own errors and offences with the same simplicity with which they relate the miracles and sufferings of their Lord. Indeed their dulness, mistakes, and failings, are so intimately blended with his history by their continual demands upon his patience and forbearance, as to make no inconsiderable or unimportant part of it. This fidelity is equally admirable both in the composition and in the preservation of the Old Testament, a book which every where testifies against those whose history it contains, and not seldom against the relators themselves. The author of the Pentateuch proclaims, in the most pointed terms, the ingratitude of those chosen people toward God. He prophesies that they will go on filling up the measure of their offences, calls heaven and earth to witness against them that he has delivered his own soul, and declares that as they have worshipped gods which were no gods, GOD will punish them by calling a people who were no people. Yet this book, so disgraceful to their national character, this register of their own offences, they would rather die than lose. 'This,' says the admirable Pascal, 'is an instance of integrity which has no example in the world, no root in nature.' In the Pentateuch and the Gospels, therefore, these parallel, these unequalled instances of sincerity, are incontrovertible proofs of the truth of both." (Mrs. MORE's *Character of St. Paul.*)

It is but just to say, that the malignant absurdity and wickedness of charging the Scriptures with an immoral tendency, have not been incurred by all who have even zealously endeavoured to undermine their Divine authority. Many of them make important concessions on this

point. They show in their own characters the effect of their unbelief, and probably the chief cause of it: Blount committed suicide, because he was prevented from an incestuous marriage; Tyndal was notoriously infamous; Hobbes changed his principles with his interests; Morgan continued to profess Christianity while he wrote against it. The moral character of Voltaire was mean and detestable; Bolinbroke was a rake and a flagitious politician. Collins and Shaftesbury qualified themselves for civil offices by receiving the sacrament, while they were endeavouring to prove the religion of which it is a solemn expression of belief, a mere imposture; Hume was revengeful, disgustingly vain, and an advocate of adultery and self murder; Paine was the slave of low and degrading habits; and Rousseau an abandoned sensualist, and guilty of the basest actions, which he scruples not to state and palliate. Yet even some of these have admitted the superior purity of the morals of the Christian revelation. The eloquent eulogium of Rousseau on the Gospel and its Author, is well known; it is a singular passage, and shows, that it is the state of the *heart*, and not the judgment, which leads to the rejection of the testimony of God. (3)

(3) "I will confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he described exactly the character of Jesus Christ: the resemblance was so striking that all the Christian fathers perceived it.

"What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophronicus [Socrates] to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion is there between them! Socrates dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last: and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precept. But where could Jesus learn among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only has given us both precept and example? The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who

Nor is it surprising that a truth so obvious should, even from adversaries, extort concession. No where but in the Scriptures have we a perfect system of morals; and the deficiencies of pagan morality only exalt the purity, the comprehensiveness, the practicability of ours. The character of the Being acknowledged as Supreme must always impress itself upon moral feeling and practice; the obligation of which rests upon his will. We have seen the views entertained by pagans on this all-important point, and their effects. The God of the Bible is "*holy*" without spot; "*just*" without intermission or partiality; "*good*," —boundlessly benevolent and beneficent; and his law is the image of himself, "*holy, just,* and *good.*" These great moral qualities are not as with them, so far as they were apprehended, merely *abstract*, and therefore comparatively feeble in their influence. In the person of Christ, our God incarnate, they are seen exemplified in *action*, displaying themselves amidst human relations, and the actual circumstances of human life. With them, the authority of moral rules was either the opinion of the wise, or the tradition of the ancient, confirmed it is true, in some degree, by observation and experience; but to us, they are given as commands immediately from the supreme Governor, and ratified as HIS by the most solemn and explicit attestations. With them, many great moral principles, being indistinctly apprehended, were matters of doubt and debate; to us, the explicit manner in which they are given excludes both: for it cannot be questioned, whether we are commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves; to do to others as we would they should do to us, a precept which comprehends almost all relative morality in one plain principle; to forgive our enemies; to love all mankind; to live "*righteously*" and "*soberly*," as well as "*godly*;" that magistrates must be a terror only to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; that subjects are to render honour to whom honour, and tribute to whom tribute is due; that masters are to be just and merciful, and servants faithful and obedient. These and many other familiar precepts are too explicit to be mistaken, and too authoritative to be disputed; two of the most powerful means of rendering law effectual. Those who never en-

administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes! if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it; it is more inconceivable, that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing man than the hero."

joyed the benefit of revelation, never conceived justly and comprehensively of that *moral state of the heart* from which right and beneficent conduct alone can flow, and therefore when they speak of the same virtues as those enjoined by Christianity, they are to be understood as attaching to them a lower idea. In this the infinite superiority of Christianity displays itself. The principle of obedience is not only a sense of duty to God, and the fear of his displeasure; but a tender love, excited by his infinite compassions to us in the gift of his Son, which shrinks from offending. To this influential motive as a *reason* of obedience, is added another, drawn from its *end:* one not less influential: but which heathen moralists never knew,—the testimony that we please God, manifested in the acceptance of our prayers, and in spiritual and felicitous communion with him. By Christianity, impurity of thought and desire is restrained in an equal degree as their overt acts in the lips and conduct. Humanity, meekness, gentleness, placability, disinterestedness, and charity, are all as clearly and solemnly enjoined as the grosser vices are prohibited; and on the unruly tongue itself is impressed "*the law of kindness.*" Nor are the injunctions feeble; they are strictly LAW, and not mere *advice* and *recommendations.* "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and thus our entrance into heaven, and our escape from perdition, are made to depend upon this preparation of mind. To all this is added possibility, nay certainty of attainment, if we use the appointed means. A pagan could draw, though not with lines so perfect, a *beau ideal* of virtue, which he never thought attainable; but the "*full assurance of hope*" is given by the religion of Christ to all who are seeking the moral renovation of their nature; because "it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure."

When such is the moral tendency of Christianity, how obvious is its beneficial tendency both as to the individual and to society! From every passion which wastes, and burns, and frets, and enfeebles the spirit, the individual is set free, and his inward peace renders his obedience cheerful and voluntary; and we might appeal to infidels themselves, whether, if the moral principles of the Gospel were wrought into the hearts, and embodied in the conduct of all men, the world would not be happy;—whether, if governments ruled, and subjects obeyed by the laws of Christ;—whether, if the rules of strict justice which are enjoined upon us regulated all the transactions of men, and all that mercy to the distressed which we are taught to feel and to practise came into operation;—and whether, if the precepts which delineate and enforce the duties of husbands, wives, masters, servants, parents, children, fully and generally governed all these relations, a better age than that called *golden* by the poets, would not be realized, and Virgil's

Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,

be far too weak to express the mighty change? Such is the tendency

of Christianity. On immense numbers of individuals it has superinduced these moral changes; all nations, where it has been fully and faithfully exhibited, bear, amidst their remaining vices, the impress of its hallowing and benevolent influence: it is now in active exertion, in many of the darkest and worst parts of the earth, to convey the same blessings; and he who would arrest its progress, were he able, would quench the only hope which remains to our world, and prove himself an enemy, not only to himself, but to all mankind. What then, we ask, does all this prove, but that the Scriptures are worthy of God, and propose the very ends which rendered a revelation necessary? Of the whole system of practical religion which it contains we may say, as of that which is embodied in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, in the words of one who, in a course of sermons on that Divine composition, has entered most deeply into its spirit, and presented a most instructive delineation of the character which it was intended to form: "Behold Christianity in its native form, as delivered by its great Author. See a picture of God, as far as he is imitable by man, drawn by God's own hand.—What beauty appears in the whole! How just a symmetry! What exact proportion in every part! How desirable is the happiness here described! How venerable, how lovely is the holiness!" (WESLEY's *Sermons*.) "If," says Bishop Taylor, "wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of God, and rays of Divinity, then that doctrine, in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God. If the holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendour of power and miraculous demonstrations, yet the excellency of what he taught makes him alone fit to be THE MASTER OF THE WORLD." (*Moral Demonstration of the Truth of the Christian Religion.*)

INTERNAL EVIDENCE of the truth of the Scriptures may also be collected from their *style*. It is various, and thus accords with the profession, that the whole is a collection of books by different individuals; each has his own peculiarity so strongly marked, and so equally sustained throughout the book or books ascribed to him, as to be a forcible proof of genuineness. The style of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the evangelists, and St. Paul, are all strikingly different. The writers of the New Testament employ Hebrew idioms, words, and phrases. The Greek in which they wrote, is not classical Greek; but, as it is observed by Bishop Marsh, "is such a dialect as would be used by persons educated in a country where Chaldee or Syriac was spoken as the vernacular tongue; but who also acquired a knowledge of Greek by frequent intercourse with strangers." This therefore affords an argument from internal evidence, that the books were written by the persons whose names they bear and it has been shown by the same

prelate, that as this particular style was changed after the destruction of Jerusalem, the same compound language could not be written in any other age than the first century, and proof is obtained from this source also in favour of the antiquity of the Scriptures of the New Testament. An argument to the same point of antiquity is drawn by MICHAELIS from the accordancy of the evangelic history and the apostolical epistles with the history and manners of the age to which they refer. "A Greek or Roman Christian," he observes, "who lived in the second or third century, though as well versed in the writings of the ancients as Eustathius or Asconius, would still have been wanting in Jewish literature; and a Jewish convert in those ages, even the most learned rabbi, would have been equally deficient in the knowledge of Greece and Rome. If then the New Testament, thus exposed to detection, (had it been an imposture,) is found, after the severest researches, to harmonize with the history, the manners, and the opinions of the first century, and since the more minutely we inquire, the more perfect we find the coincidence, we must conclude that it was beyond the reach of human abilities to effectuate so wonderful a deception."

The *manner* of the sacred writers is also in proof, that they were conscious of the truth of what they relate. The whole narrative is simple and natural. Even in the accounts given of the creation, the flood, the exodus from Egypt, and the events of the life and death of Christ, where designing men would have felt most inclined to endeavour to heighten the impression by glowing and elaborate description, the same chastened simplicity is preserved. "These sober recorders of events the most astonishing, are never carried away, by the circumstances they relate, into any pomp of diction, into any use of superlatives. There is not, perhaps, in the whole Gospel a single interjection not an exclamation, nor any artifice to call the reader's attention to the marvels of which the relaters were the witnesses. Absorbed in their holy task, no alien idea presents itself to their mind: the object before them fills it. They never digress; are never called away by the solicitations of vanity, or the suggestions of curiosity. No image starts up to divert their attention. There is, indeed, in the Gospels much imagery, much allusion, much allegory, but they proceed from their Lord, and are recorded as his. The writers never fill up the intervals between events. They leave circumstances to make their own impression, instead of helping out the reader by any reflections of their own. They always feel the holy 'ground on which they stand. They preserve the gravity of history and the severity of truth, without enlarging the outline or swelling the expression.'" (*Mrs.* MORE's *Character of St Paul.*)

Another source of INTERNAL EVIDENCE, arising from *incidental coincidences*, which, from "their latency and minuteness," must be supposed

to have their foundation in *truth*, is opened, and ably illustrated by Dr Paley, in his "Horæ Paulinæ," a work which will well repay the perusal.

Much of the COLLATERAL EVIDENCE of the truth of the Scriptures generally, and of Christianity in particular, has been anticipated in the course of this discussion, and need not again be resumed. The agreement of the final revelation of the will of God, by the ministry of Christ and his apostles, with former authenticated revelations, has been pointed out: so that the whole constitutes one body of harmonious doctrines, gradually introduced, and at length fully unfolded and confirmed. The suitableness of the Christian revelation to the state of the world, at the time of its communication, follows from the view we have given of the necessity, not only of a revelation generally, but of such a revelation as the mercy of God has vouchsafed to the world through his Son. It has also been shown, that its historical facts accord with the credible histories and traditions of the same time; that monuments remain to attest its truth, in the institutions of the Christian Church; and that adversaries have made concessions in its favour. (4) Our farther remarks on this subject, though many other interesting particulars might be embraced, must be confined to two particulars, but each of a very convincing character. The first is, the marvellous diffusion of Christianity in the three first centuries; the second is, the actual beneficial effect produced, and which is still producing, by Christianity upon mankind.

With respect to the first, the fact to be accounted for is, that the first preachers of the Gospel, though unsupported by human power, and uncommended by philosophic wisdom, and even in opposition to both, succeeded in effecting a revolution in the opinions and manners of a great portion of the civilized world, to which there is no parallel in the history of mankind. (5) "Though aspersed by the slander of the malicious, and exposed to the sword of the powerful, in a short period of time they induced multitudes of various nations, who were equally distinguished

(4) The collateral testimony to certain facts mentioned in Scripture, from coins, medals, and ancient marbles, may be seen well applied in HORNE's *Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, vol. i, p. 238.

(5) The success of Mohammed, though sometimes pushed forward as a parallel, is, in fact, both as to the means employed and the effect produced, a perfect contrast. The *means* were conquest and compulsion: the *effect* was to legalize and sanctify, so to speak, the natural passions of men for plunder and sensual gratification; and it surely argues either a very frail judgment, or a criminal disposition, to object, that a contrast so marked should ever have been exhibited as a correspondence. Men were persuaded, when they were not forced, to join the ranks of the Arabian impostor by the hope of plunder, and a present and future life of brutal gratification. Men were persuaded to join the apostles by the evidence of truth, and by the hope of future spiritual blessings, but with the certainty of present disgrace and suffering.

by the peculiarity of their manners, and the diversity of their language, to forsake the religion of their ancestors. The converts whom they made deserted ceremonies and institutions, which were defended by vigorous authority, sanctified by remote age, and associated with the most alluring gratification of the passions." (KETT's *Sermons at the Bampton Lecture.*)

After their death the same doctrines were taught, and the same effects followed, though successive and grievous persecutions were waged against all who professed their faith in Christ, by successive emperors and inferior magistrates. Tacitus, about A. D. 62, speaking of Christianity says, "This pernicious superstition, though checked for a while, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city of Rome also. At first they only were apprehended who confessed themselves to be of that sect; afterward a *vast multitude* were discovered, and cruelly punished." Pliny, the governor of Pontus and Bithynia, near eighty years after the death of Christ, in his well-known letter to Trajan, observes, "The contagion of this superstition has not only invaded cities, but the smaller towns also, and the whole country." He speaks too of the idol temples having been "*almost forsaken.*" To the same effect the Christian fathers speak. About A. D. 140, Justin Martyr writes, "There is not a nation, Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the name of the crucified Jesus." In A. D. 190, Tertullian, in his Apology, appeals to the Roman governors—"We were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities and towns; the camp, the senate, and the forum." In A. D. 220, Origen says, "By the good providence of God, the Christian religion has so flourished and increased, that it is now preached freely, and without molestation." These representations, Gibbon contends, are exaggerations on both sides, produced by the fears of Pliny, and the zeal of the Christian fathers. But even granting some degree of exaggeration arising not designedly from warm feelings, an unquestionable occurrence proves the futility of the exceptions taken to these statements by the elegant but infidel historian. The great fact is, that in the year A. D. 300, *Christianity became the established religion of the Roman empire, and paganism was abolished:* and it follows from this event, that the religion which thus became triumphant after unparalleled trials and sufferings must have established itself, previously to its receiving the sanction of the state, in the belief of a great majority of the *one hundred and twenty millions* of people supposed to be contained in the empire, or no emperor would have been insane enough to make the attempt to change the religion of so vast a state, nor, had he made it, could he have succeeded.

The success of Christianity in the three centuries preceding Constan-

tine, has justly been considered as in no unimportant sense *miraculous*, and as such, an illustrious proof of its Divinity. "The obstacles which opposed the first reception of Christianity were so numerous and formidable, and the human instruments employed for its diffusion so apparently weak and insufficient, that a comparison between them will not only show that the passions and opposition of man, far from impeding the Divine designs, may ultimately become the means of their perfect accomplishment, but will fully demonstrate the Divine origin of Christianity by displaying the powerful assistance which the Almighty supplied for its establishment." (KETT's *Sermons*.) The astonishing success of Christianity under such circumstances, and at so early a period, affords a strong confirmation to the truth of *miracles*, because it implies them, as no other means can be conceived by which an attention so general should have been excited to a religion which was not only without the sanction of authority and rank, but opposed by both; the scene of whose facts lay in a province the people of which were despised; and whose doctrines held out nothing but spiritual attainments. By the effect of miracles during the lives of the first preachers, public curiosity was excited, and they obtained an audience which they could not otherwise have commanded. This power of working miracles was transmitted to their successors, and continued until the purposes of Infinite Wisdom were accomplished. They decreased in number in the second century and left but a few traces at the close of the third. (6) The increase of Christians implied even more than miracles; such was the holy character of the majority, during the continuance of the reproach and persecutions which followed the Christian name; such the patience with which they suffered, and the fortitude with which they died; that the *influence of God* upon their hearts is as manifest in the new and hallowed character which distinguished them, and the meek, forgiving, and passive virtues which they exhibited, to the astonishment of the heathen, as his *power* in the miracles by which their attention was first drawn to examine that truth which they afterward believed and held fast to death.

The *actual effect* produced by this new religion upon society, and which it is still producing, is another point in the collateral evidence: for Christianity has not only an *adaptation* for improving the condition

(6) Attempts have been made to deny the existence of miraculous powers in the ages immediately succeeding that of the apostles, but it stands on the unanimous and successive testimony of the fathers. Gibbon, on this subject, has borrowed his objections from "The Free Inquiry" of Dr. Middleton, whose *belief* in Christianity is very suspicious. This book received many able answers; *but* none more so than one by the Rev. John Wesley. It is a triumph to truth to state, that Dr. Middleton felt himself obliged to give up his ground by shifting the question.

of society; its excellence is not only to be argued from its effects stated on hypothetical circumstances; but it has actually won its moral victories, and in all ages has exhibited its trophies. In every pagan country where it has prevailed, it has abolished *idolatry* with its sanguinary and polluted rites. It also effected this mighty revolution, that the sanctions of religion should no longer be in favour of the worst passions and practices, but be directed against them. It has raised the standard of *morality* and by that means, even where its full effects have not been suffered to display themselves, has insensibly improved the manners of every Christian state: what heathen nations are, in point of morals, is now well known; and the information on this subject which for several years past has been increasing, has put it out of the power of infidels to urge the superior manners of either China or Hindostan. It has abolished *infanticide* and *human sacrifices*, so prevalent among ancient and modern heathens; put an end to *polygamy* and *divorce;* and, by the institution of marriage in an indissoluble bond, has given birth to a felicity and sanctity in the domestic circle which it never before knew. It has exalted the condition and character of *woman*, and by that means has humanized *man;* given refinement and delicacy to society; and created a *new and important affection* in the human breast—the love of woman founded on *esteem;* an affection generally unknown to heathens the most refined. (7) It abolished domestic slavery in ancient Europe; and from its principles the struggle which is now maintained with African slavery draws its energy, and promises a triumph as complete. It has given a milder character to *war*, and taught modern nations to treat their prisoners with humanity, and to restore them by exchange to their respective countries. It has laid the basis of a *jurisprudence* more just and equal; given civil rights to subjects, and placed restraints on absolute power; and crowned its achievements by its *charity*. Hospitals, schools, and many other institutions for the aid of the aged and the poor, are almost exclusively its own creations, and they abound most where its influence is most powerful. The same effects to this day are resulting from its influence in those heathen countries into which the Gospel has been carried by missionaries sent out from this and other Christian states. In some of them idolatry has been renounced; infants, and widows, and aged persons who would have been immolated to their gods or abandoned by their cruelty, have been preserved, and are now "*the living to praise its Divine Author, as they do at this day.*" In other instances the light is prevailing against the darkness; and those systems of dark and sanguinary superstition which have stood for ages only to pollute and oppress, without any symptom of decay, now betray the

(7) Among the Greeks, the education of women was chiefly confined to *courtezans*.

shocks they have sustained by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and nod to their final fall. (8)

CHAPTER XX.

Miscellaneous Objections Answered.

The system of revealed religion contained in the Old and New Testaments, being opposed to the natural corrupt inclinations, and often to the actual practice of men; laying them under rules to which they are averse; threatening them with a result which they dread; holding out to them no pleasures but such as they distaste, and no advantages but those which they would gladly exchange for a perpetual life of sinful indulgence on earth; will be regarded by many of the most reflecting among them as a system of restraint; and must therefore often excite either direct hostility, or a disposition to encourage and admit suggestions tending to weaken its authority. It may be added that, as the Scriptures cannot be known without careful examination, which implies a serious habit not to be found in the majority, objections have been often raised by ingenious men in great ignorance of the volume itself against which they are directed; and being sometimes urged on the ground of some popular view of a fact or doctrine, they have been received as carelessly as they were uttered. Philosophers too have sometimes constructed hasty theories on various subjects, which have either contradicted or been thought to contradict some parts of the Scriptures; and the array of science, and the fascination of novelty, have equally deceived and misled the theorist himself and his disciples. Since the revival of letters, and in countries where freedom of discussion has been allowed, objectors have arisen, and numerous attempts have been made to shake the faith of mankind. That specious kind of infidelity known by the name of "*Deism*," made its appearance in Italy and France about the middle of the sixteenth century, and in England early in the seventeenth. Under this appellation, and that of "The Religion of Nature," each adopted to deceive the unwary, the attack upon Christianity was at first cautious, and accompanied with many professions of regard for its manifold excellencies. Lord Herbert of Cherbury was the first who in this country advocated this system. He lays down five primary articles of religion, as containing every thing necessary to be believed; and as he contends they are all discoverable by our natural faculties, they supersede, he informs us, the necessity of a revelation. They are

(8) For an ample illustration of the actual effects of Christianity upon society, see Bishop Porteus's *Beneficial Effects of Christianity*, and Ryan's *History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind*.

—that there is a supreme God—that he is chiefly to be worshipped—that piety and virtue are the principal part of his worship—that repentance expiates offence—and that there is a state of future rewards and punishments. The history of infidelity from this time is a striking comment upon the words of St. Paul, "*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;*" for, in the progress of this deadly error, all Lord Herbert's five articles of natural religion have been questioned or given up by those who followed him in his fundamental principle, "that nothing can be admitted which is not discoverable by our natural faculties." HOBBES, who succeeded next in this warfare against the Bible, if he acknowledges that there is a God, represents him as *corporeal*, and our duty to him as a chimera, the civil magistrate being supreme in all things both civil and sacred. SHAFTESBURY insists that the doctrine of rewards and punishments is degrading to the understanding and detrimental to moral virtue. HUME denies the relation between cause and effect, and thus attempts to overthrow the argument for the existence of God from the frame of the universe. By others the worship of God, which Lord Herbert advocates, has been rejected as unreasonable, because he needs not *our* praises, and is not to be turned from his purposes by *our* prayers. As all law, of Divine authority, is on this system renounced, so "piety and virtue" must be understood to be what every man chooses to consider them, which amounts to their annihilation; and as for future reward and punishment, philosophy, since Lord Herbert's days, has discovered that the soul of man is material; or rather, being a mere result of the organization of the body, that it dies with it. The great principle of the English proto-infidel, "the sufficiency of our natural faculties to form a religion for ourselves, and to decide upon the merits of revealed truth," is, however, the principle of all; and this being once conceded, the instances just given are sufficiently in proof that the cable is slipped, and that every one is left to take his course wherever the winds and the currents may impel his *unpiloted*, *uncharted*, and *uncompassed* bark. This *grand principle* of error, between which and absolute Atheism there are but a few steps, has been largely refuted in the foregoing pages, and the claims of the Holy Scriptures to be considered as a revelation from God, established by arguments, the force of which in *all other cases* is felt, and acknowledged, and acted upon even by unbelievers themselves. If this has been done satisfactorily, the objections which remain are of little weight, were they even less capable of being repelled; and if no answer can be found to some of the difficulties which may be urged, this circumstance is much more in accordance with the truth of a revelation, than it would be with its falsehood. "We do not deny," says an excellent writer on the evidences of Christianity, (Dr. OLINTHUS GREGORY,) "that the scheme of revelation has its difficulties; for if the things of nature are often diffi-

cult to comprehend, it would be strange indeed if supernatural matters were so simple, and obvious, and suited to finite capacities, as never to startle and puzzle us at all. He who denies the Bible to have come from God because of these difficulties, may for exactly the same reason deny that the world was formed by him."

The mere cavils of infidel writers may be hastily dismissed; the most plausible objections shall be considered more at large. As to the former few of them could have been urged if those who have adduced them had consulted the works of commentators, and Biblical critics, writings with which it is evident they have little acquaintance; and thus they have shown how ill disposed they have been to become fully acquainted with the subjects which they have subjected to their criticism. To this may be added their ignorance of the idiom of the Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament; their inattention to the ancient manners and customs of the countries where the sacred writers lived, to occasional errors in the transcription of numerous copies which may be rectified by collation, and to the different readings, which, to a candid criticism, would generally furnish the solution of the difficulty.

The Bible has been vehemently assaulted, because it represents God as giving command to the Israelites to exterminate the nations of Canaan; but a few remarks will be sufficient to prove how little weight there is in the charges which, on this account, have been made against the author of the Pentateuch. The objection cannot be argued upon the mere ground that it is contrary to the Divine justice or mercy to cut off a people indiscriminately, from the eldest to the youngest, since this is done in earthquakes, pestilences, &c. The cholera morbus, which has been for four years past wasting various parts of Asia, has probably destroyed half a million of persons of all ages. The character of the God of nature is not therefore contradicted by that ascribed to the God of the Bible. The whole objection resolves itself into this question: Was it consistent with the character of God to employ *human agents* in this work of destruction? Who can prove that it was not? No one; and yet here lies the whole stress of the objection. The Jews were not rendered more cruel by their being so commissioned; for we find them much more merciful in their institutions than other ancient nations;—nor can this instance be pleaded in favour of exterminating wars, for there was in the case a special commission for a special purpose, and by that it was limited. Other considerations are also to be included. The sins of the Canaanites were of so gross a nature, that it was necessary to mark them with signal punishments for the benefit of surrounding nations; the employing of the Israelites, as instruments under a special and publicly proclaimed commission, connected the punishment more visibly with the offence, than if it had been inflicted by the array of warring elements, while the Israelites themselves would be

deeply impressed with the guilt of idolatry, and its ever accompanying polluted and sanguinary rites; and finally the Canaanites had been long spared, and in the meantime both warned by partial judgments, and reproved by the remaining adherents of the patriarchal religion who resided among them.

Thus the objection rests upon no foundation. The destruction of infants, so often dwelt upon, takes place in nature and providence; the objection to the employment of human agents, arising from habits of *inhumanity* being thereby induced, assumes what is false in fact; for this effect upon the Jews was prevented by the circumstance of their knowing that they acted as ministers of the Divine displeasure, and under his commission; and some important reasons may be discovered for executing the judgment by *men*, and especially this, that it might exhibit the evil of a sanguinary and obscene idolatry.

That law in Deuteronomy, which authorizes parents, the father and the mother, to bring "a stubborn and rebellious son," who was also "a glutton and a drunkard," before the elders of the city, that, if guilty, he might be stoned, has been called inhuman and brutal. In point of fact, it was, however, a merciful regulation. In almost all ancient nations, parents had the power of taking away the lives of their children. This was a branch of the old patriarchal authority which did not all at once merge into the kingly governments which were afterward established. There is reason therefore to believe that it was possessed by the heads of families among the Israelites, and that this was the first attempt to control it, by obliging the crimes alleged against their children to be proved before regular magistrates, and thus preventing the effects of unbridled passions.

The intentional offering of Isaac by Abraham has also had its share of censure. The answer is, 1. That Abraham, who was in the habit of sensible commmunication with God, could have no doubt of the Divine command, and of the right of God to take away the life he had given. 2. That he proceeded to execute the command of God, in faith, as the Apostle Paul has stated, that God would raise his son from the dead. The whole transaction was extraordinary, and cannot therefore be judged by common rules; and it could only be fairly objected to, if it had been so stated as to encourage human sacrifices. Here, however, are sufficient guards; an indubitable Divine command was given; the sacrifice was prevented by the same authority; and the history stands in a book which represents human sacrifices as an abomination to God.

Indelicacy and immodesty have been charged upon some parts of the Scriptures. This objection has something in it which indicates malignity, rather than an honest and principled exception: for in no instance are any statements made *in order* to incite impurity; and nothing, throughout the whole Scripture, is represented as more offensive to God,

or as more certainly excluding persons from the kingdom of heaven, than the unlawful gratification of the senses. It is also to be noted, that many of the passages objected to are in the *laws* and *prohibitions* of both Testaments, and as well might the statute and common law of this country be the subject of reprehension, and be held up as tending to encourage vices of various kinds, because they must, with more or less of circumstantiality, describe them. We are farther to take into account the simplicity of manners and language in early times. We observe, even among the peasantry of modern states, a language, on the subjects referred to, which is more direct, and what refined society would call gross; but greater real indelicacy does not necessarily follow. Countries and classes of people might be pointed out, where the language which expresses sensual indulgence has more of caution and of periphrasis, while the known facts show that their morals are exceedingly polluted.

Several objections which have been raised against characters and transactions in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, are dissipated by the single consideration, that where they are obviously immoral or unjustifiable they are never approved; and are merely stated as facts of history. The conduct of Ehud, of Samson, and of Jephthah, may be given as instances.

The advice of David, when on his death bed, respecting Joab and Shimei, has been attributed to his private resentment. This is not the fact. He spoke in his character of king and magistrate, and gave his advice on public grounds, as committing the kingdom to his son.

The conduct of David also toward the Ammonites, in putting them '*under saws and harrows of iron*," has been the subject of severe animadversion. But the expression means no more than that he employed them in laborious works, as *sawing*, making iron *harrows*, hewing wood, and making *bricks*, the Hebrew prefix signifying *to* as well as *under*. "*He put them to saws and harrows of iron* (some render it *iron mines*,) *and to axes of iron, and made them to pass through the brick kiln.*"

With respect to the imprecations found in many parts of Scripture and which have been represented as expressions of revenge and malice, it has been often and satisfactorily observed, that they are predictions and not anathemas, the imperative mood being put for the future tense, according to the Hebrew idiom.

These have been adduced as specimens of the objections urged by infidel writers against the Scriptures, and of the ease with which they may be met. For others of a similar kind, and for answers to objections founded upon supposed contradictions between different passages of Scripture, reference must be made to commentators. (9) With

(9) See also a copious collection of these supposed contradictions, with judicious explanations, in the Appendix to vol. i. of HORNE'S Introduction, &c.

respect to all of them, it has been well observed, "that a little skill in the original languages of the Scriptures, their idioms and properties, and in the times, occasions, and scope of the several books, as well as in the antiquities and customs of those countries which were the scenes of the transactions recorded, will always clear the main difficulties."

To some other objections of a philosophical kind, as being of a more imposing aspect, the answers may be more extended.

Between natural philosophy and revelation—the book of nature and the book of God—it has been a favourite practice with unbelievers to institute a contrast, and to set the plainness and uncontradictory character of the one against the mysteries and difficulties of the other. The common ground on which all such objections rest, is an unwillingness to admit as truth, and to receive as established and authorized doctrine, what is incomprehensible. They contend, that if a revelation has been made, there can be no mystery in it, for that is a contradiction; and that if mysteries, that is, things incomprehensible, are held to be a part of it, this is fatal to its claims as a *revelation*. The sophism is easily answered. Many doctrines, many duties, are comprehensible enough; no mystery at all is involved in them; and as to incomprehensible subjects, nothing is more undoubted, as we have already shown, than that a fact may be the subject of revelation, as that God is eternal and omnipresent, and still remain mysterious and incomprehensible. The fact itself is not hidden, or expressed in language or symbol so equivocal as to throw the meaning into difficulty, the only sense in which the argument could be valid. As a fact, it is clearly revealed that these are attributes of the Divine Nature; but both, notwithstanding that clear and indubitable revelation, are still incomprehensible. It is not revealed HOW God is eternal and omnipresent, nor is such a revelation pretended; but it is revealed THAT HE IS SO—not HOW a trinity of persons exists in unity of essence; but THAT SUCH IS the mode of the Divine existence. If however men hesitate to admit incomprehensible subjects as matters of faith, they cannot be permitted to fly for relief from revelation to philosophy, and much less to set up its superior claims, as to clearness of manifestation, to the Holy Scriptures. There too it will be seen, that mystery and revelation go inseparably together; that he who will not admit the mystery cannot have the benefit of the revelation; and that he who takes the revelation of *facts*, embraces at the same time the mystery of their *causes*. The facts, for instance, of the attraction of gravitation, of cohesion, of electricity, of magnetism, of congelation, of thawing, of evaporation, are all admitted. The experimental and inductive philosophy of modern times, has made many revelations of the *relations* and in some instances of the *proximate* causes of these phenomena; but the real causes are all confessedly hidden. With respect to mechanics, says a writer who has devoted his life to philosophical

studies, (Dr. GREGORY'S *Letters on the Christian Religion*,) "this science is conversant about *force*, *matter*, *time*, *motion*, *space*; each of these has occasioned the most elaborate disquisitions, and the most violent disputes. Let it be asked, What is *force?* If the answerer be candid, his reply will be, 'I cannot tell so as to satisfy every inquirer, or so as to enter into the essence of the thing.' Again, What is *matter?* 'I cannot tell.' What is *motion?* 'I cannot tell;'" and so of the rest. "The fact of the communication of motion from one body to another, is as inexplicable as the communication of Divine influences. How, then, can the former be admitted with any face, while the latter is denied solely on the ground of its incomprehensibility?

"But perhaps I may be told, that although things which are incomprehensible occur in our physical and mixed inquiries, they have no place in 'pure mathematics, where all is not only demonstrable, but intelligible.' This, again, is an assertion which I cannot admit; and for the denial of which I shall beg leave to produce my reasons, as this will, I apprehend, make still more in favour of my general argument. Now, here it is known, geometricians can *demonstrate* that there are curves which approach continually to some fixed right line, without the possibility of ever meeting it. Such, for example, are hyperbolas, which continually approach toward their asymptotes, but cannot possibly meet them, unless an assignable finite space can become equal to nothing. Such, again, are conchoids, which continually approach to their directrices, yet can never meet them, unless a certain point can be both beyond and in contact with a given line at the same moment. Mathematicians can also demonstrate that a space *infinite* in one sense, may, by its rotation, generate a solid of *finite capacity*; as is the case with the solid formed by the rotation of a logarithmic curve of infinite length upon its axis, or that formed by the rotation of an Apollonian hyperbola upon its asymptote. They can also show in numerous instances, that a variable space shall be continually augmenting, and yet never become equal to a certain finite quantity; and they frequently make transformations with great facility and neatness, by means of expressions to which no definite ideas can be attached. Can we, for example, obtain any clear comprehension, or indeed any notion at all, of the value of a power whose exponent is an *acknowledged* imaginary quantity, as $x^{\sqrt{-1}}$? Can we, in like manner, obtain any distinct idea of a series constituted of an *infinite* number of terms? In each case the answer, I am convinced, must be in the negative. Yet the science, in which these and numerous other *incomprehensibles* occur, is called *Mathesis*, THE DISCIPLINE, because of its incomparable superiority to other studies in evidence and certainty, and, therefore, its singular adaptation to discipline the mind. How does it happen, now, that when the investigation is bent toward objects which cannot be comprehended, the

mind arrives at that in which it acquiesces *as certainty*, and rests satisfied? It is not, manifestly, because we have a distinct perception of the *nature* of the objects of the inquiry; (for that is precluded by the supposition, and, indeed, by the preceding statement,) but because we *have* such a distinct perception of the *relation* which those objects bear one toward another, and can assign positively, without danger of error, the exact relation, as to identity or diversity, of the quantities before us, at every step of the process."

Modern astronomy has displayed the immense extent of the universe and by analogical reasoning has made it probable, at least, that the planets of our and of other systems may be inhabited by rational and moral beings like ourselves; and from these premises infidel philosophy has argued with apparent humility for the insignificance of the human race, and the improbability of supposing that a Divine person should have been sent into this world for its instruction and salvation, when, in comparison with the solar system, it is but a point, and that system itself, in comparison of the universe, may be nothing more.

Plausible as this may appear, nothing can have less weight, even if only the philosophy and not the theology of the case be taken into consideration. The intention with which man is thus compared with the universe is to prove his insignificance; and the comparison must be made either between man and the *vastness* of planetary and stellar matter, or between the *number* of mankind, and the *number* of supposed planetary inhabitants. If the former, we may reply with Dr. Beattie, "Great extent is a thing so striking to our imagination, that sometimes, in the moment of forgetfulness, we are apt to think nothing can be important but what is of vast corporeal magnitude. And yet, even to our apprehension, when we are willing to be rational, how much more sublime and more interesting an object is a mind like that of Newton, than the unwieldy force and brutal stupidity of such a monster as the poets describe Polyphemus? Who, that had it in his power, would scruple to destroy a whale in order to save a child? Nay, when compared with the happiness of one immortal mind, the greatest imaginable accumulation of inanimate substance must appear an insignificant thing. 'If we consider,' says Bentley, 'the dignity of an intelligent being, and put that in the scale against brute and inanimate matter, we may affirm, without overvaluing human nature, that the soul of one virtuous man is of greater worth and excellency, than the sun and his planets, and all the stars in the world.' Let us not then make bulk the standard of value; or judge of the importance of man from the weight of his body, or from the size or situation of the planet that is now his place of abode."

To the same effect an ingenious and acute writer remarks upon a passage in Saussure, (*Voyages dans les Alpes*,) who speaks of men in the phrase of the modern philosophy, as "the little beings which crawl upon

the surface of the earth," and as shrinking into nothing both as to "space and *time*," in comparison with the vast mountains and "the great epoch" has of nature." "If," says Mr. Granville Penn, (*Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaic Geologies*,) "there is any sense or virtue in this reflection, it must consist in duly estimating the *relative importance* of the *two* magnitudes and durations, and in concluding logically, the comparative insignificancy of *the smaller*. And it will then necessarily follow, that the insignificancy of the *smaller* would lessen, in the same proportion in which it might *increase in bulk*. If the little beings therefore were to be magnified in the proportions of 2, 3, 4, &c, their insignificancy, relatively to the great features of the globe, would necessarily diminish in the same ratio. The smaller the disproportion between the man and the mountain, the less would be the relative insignificance of the former; and although the increase of magnitude in the smaller object be ever so inconsiderable, yet if it is *positive and real*, its dignity must be proportionately increased in the *true nature of things:* the *bigger* the being that crawls upon the surface of this globe, the *less absurd* would be the supposition that he is the final object of this terrestrial creation. The Irish *giant*, therefore, whose altitude exceeded the measure of *eight* feet, would exceed in relative dignity, by the same proportion, BACON and NEWTON, whose height did not attain to *six* feet. If this is *nonsense*, then must that also be *nonsense* from which it is the genuine conclusion: viz. that the *material magnitudes* of the little beings, or their *duration* upon the earth on which they '*crawl*,' determines, in any manner, their importance, in the creation, relatively to the primordial mountains which arise above it, or to the extent of the regions which may be surveyed from their summits. For if the same *physically small* beings possess *another magnitude*, which can be brought to another and a different scale of computation from that of *physical* or *material* magnitude; a scale infinitely surpassing in importance the greatest measures of that magnitude; then there will be nothing astonishing or irrational in the supposition, that the highest mountains, and the widest regions, and the entire system to which they pertain, may be subservient to the ends of those beings, and to that *other system* to which they pertain; which latter will thus be found superior in importance to the former. Such a scale is that, by which the *intelligent*, *moral*, and *immortal* nature of MAN is to be measured, and which the sacred historian calls, a formation '*after the image and likeness of* GOD;' a scale so little taken into the contemplation of the science of *mere physics*. As soon, however, as that moral scale of magnitude once supersedes the *physical* scale in the apprehension of the mind; as soon as the mind perceives, that the *duration* of that intelligent moral nature infinitely exceeds the vastest '*epocha of nature*' which the imagination of the mineral geology can represent to itself, and that, though the physical nature of man is limited to a very small measure of

time, yet his *moral* nature is unlimited in time, and will outlast all the mountains of the globe; it then perceives, at the same moment, the counterfeit quality of the reflection, which at first appeared so sublime and so humble, so profound and so devout. The sublimity and humility betray themselves to be the disparagement and degradation of our nature; the profundity is found to be mere surface, and the devotion to be a retrocession from the light of revelation."

If the comparison of man with mere material magnitude will not then support this effort to effect his degradation, and to shame him out of his trust in the loving kindness of his God; if the comparison be made between things which have no relations in common, and is therefore absurd; as little will it serve this unnatural attempt to prostrate man to an insect rank, and to inspire him with reptile feelings, to conclude his insignificance from the *number* of other beings. For it is plain that their number alters not his real character; he is still immortal, though myriads beside him are immortal, and still he has his deep capacity of pleasure and of pain. Unless, therefore, it could be proved that the care of God for *each* must be diminished as the number of his creatures is increased; there is, as Mr. Penn has stated it, neither "sense nor virtue" in such reflections upon the littleness of man; and they imply, indeed, a base and an unworthy reflection upon the supreme Creator himself, as though he could not bestow upon *all* the beings he has made a care and a love adequate to their circumstances. What man is with respect to God, can only be collected from the Divine procedures toward him; and these are sufficient to excite the devout exclamations of the psalmist, "*What is man that* THOU *art* MINDFUL *of him? or the son of man that* THOU VISITEST *him?*" That he has not only been made by God, but that he is governed by his providence, none but Atheists will deny; but any argument drawn from such premises as the above would conclude as forcibly against providence, as it can be made to conclude against redemption. "Our Saviour," says Dr. Beattie, "as if to obviate objections of this nature, expresses most emphatically the superintending care of Providence, when he teaches that it is God who adorns the grass of the field, that without him a sparrow falls not on the ground, and that even the hairs of our head are numbered. Yet this is no exaggeration but must, if God is omniscient and almighty, be literally true. By a stupendous exuberance of animal, vegetable, and mineral production, and by an apparatus still more stupendous (if that were possible) for the distribution of light and heat, he supplies the means of life and comfort to the short-lived inhabitants of this globe. Can it then appear incredible; nay, does not this consideration render it in the highest degree probable, that he has also prepared the means of eternal happiness for beings, whom he has formed for eternal duration, whom he has endowed with faculties so noble as those of the human soul, and for whose accommo

dation chiefly, during their present state of trial, he has provided al the magnificence of this sublunary world?"

There is, however, another consideration, which gives a sublime and, overwhelming grandeur to the Scripture view of the redemption of the race of man, and of which, for the want of acquaintance with our sacred writings, infidel philosophers appear never to have entertained the least conception. It is the moral connection of this world with the whole universe of intelligent creatures; and the "intention" there was in the Divine mind to convey to other beings, by the history and great results of his moral government over one branch of his universal family, a view of his own perfections; of the duties and dangers of created and finite beings; of transgression and holiness, in their principles and in their effects; by a *course of action* so much more influential than *abstract* truth. Intimations of this great and impressive view are found in various passages of the New Testament, and it opens a scene of inconceivable moral magnificence—"*To the intent, that to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.*" (1)

It has been objected to the Mosaic chronology, that it fixes the era of creation only about four thousand years earlier than the Christian era; and against this, evidence has been brought from two sources—the chronology of certain ancient nations, and the structure of the earth.

The objections drawn from the former of these sources have of late rapidly weakened, and are in fact given up by many whose deference to the authority of Scripture is very slight, though but a few years ago nothing was more confidently urged by skeptical writers than the refutation of Moses by the Chinese, Hindoo, and Egyptian chronologies, founded, as it was then stated, on very ancient astronomical observations

(1) "In this our first period of existence, our eye cannot penetrate beyond the present scene, and the human race appears one great and separate community; but with other worlds, and other communities, we probably may, and every argument for the truth of our religion gives us reason to think that we shall, be connected hereafter. And if by our behaviour we may, even while here, as our Lord positively affirms, heighten in some degree the felicity of angels, our salvation may hereafter be a matter of importance, not to us only, but to many other orders of immortal beings. They, it is true, will not suffer for our guilt, nor be rewarded for our obedience. But it is not absurd to imagine, that our fall and recovery may be useful to them as an example; and that the Divine grace manifested in our redemption may raise their adoration and gratitude into higher raptures, and quicken their ardour to inquire with ever new delight, into the dispensations of infinite wisdom. This is not mere conjecture. It derives plausibility from many analogies in nature, as well as from Holy Writ, which represents the mystery of our redemption as an object of curiosity to superior beings, and our repentance as an occasion of their joy." (Dr. BEATTIE'S *Evidences of the Christian Religion* See also DR. CHALMERS'S *Discourses on the Modern Astronomy*.)

preserved to the present day. It is however now clearly proved, that the astronomical tables, from which it has been attempted to assign a prodigious antiquity to the Hindoos, have been calculated backward; (CUVIER'S *Theory of the Earth*;) and among the Chinese the earliest astronomical observation that appears to rest upon good grounds, is now found to be one made not more than two thousand nine hundred years ago. (CUVIER'S *Theory of the Earth.*) As for the conclusion drawn from the supposed zodiacs in the temples of Esneh and Dendara in Egypt, it is now strongly doubted whether the figures represented upon them are astronomical or mythological, that is, whether they are zodiacs at all. Their astronomical character is strongly denied by Dr. Richardson, a late traveller, who examined them with great care; and who gives large reasons for his opinion. Even if the astronomical character of these assumed zodiacs be allowed, they are found to prove nothing. M. Biot, an eminent French mathematician, has recently fixed the date of the oldest of them at only seven hundred and sixteen years before Christ.

Against the excessive antiquity assigned to some ancient states, or claimed by them, the science of geology has at length entered its protest; and though, as we shall presently see, it has originated chronological objections to the Mosaic date of the creation, on the origin of nations it has made a full concession to the history of the Scriptures. Cuvier observes—"By a careful investigation of what has taken place on the surface of the globe since it has been laid dry for the last time, and its continents have assumed their present form, at least in such parts as are somewhat elevated above the level of the ocean, it may be clearly seen that this revolution, and consequently the establishment of our existing societies, could not have been very ancient." (*Theory of the Earth.*) D'Aubuisson remarks, "that the soils of all the plains were deposited in the bosom of a tranquil water; that their actual order is only to be dated from the retreat of that water; and that the date of that period is not very ancient." (*Traité de Géognosie.*) "Dolomieu, Saussure, De Luc, and the most distinguished naturalists of the age, have coincided in this conclusion, to which they have been led by the evidence of various monuments and *natural chronometers* which the earth exhibits; and which remain perpetual vouchers for the veracity of the Mosaic chronology, with respect to the epocha of the revolution which the Mosaical history relates." (2)

(2) PENN'S *Comparative Estimate, &c.* Professor Jamieson, in his Mineralogical Illustrations of Cuvier's Theory, observes, "The front of Salisbury Craigs near Edinburgh, affords a fine example of the natural chronometer, described in the text. The acclivity is covered with loose masses that have fallen from the hill itself; and the quantity of debris is in proportion to the time which has elapsed since the waters of the ocean formerly covered the neighbouring country

From the absence of all counter evidence in the records of ancient nations, as well as from these philosophical conclusions, which are to be considered in the light of *concessions* made to the chronology of the Pentateuch, we may therefore conclude, that, as to the origin of nations and the period of the general deluge, the testimony of Scripture remains unshaken.

Geology has, however, objected to the Mosaic date of the creation of the earth, which it is said affords a period too limited to account for various phenomena which modern researches have brought under consideration. To the last general inundation of the earth, it is allowed, that no higher a date can be assigned than that which Moses ascribes to the flood of Noah; but *several* revolutions, each of which has changed the surface of the earth, are contended for, separated from each other by long intervals of time; and, above all, it is assumed, that the elements of the primitive earths were contained in an "original chaotic fluid," and that, in obeying the laws of the affinity of composition, they coalesced and grouped themselves together in different manners, and settled themselves into order, according to certain laws of matter *after an unassignable series of ages.* These are the views of Cuvier, D'Aubuisson, De Luc, and other eminent writers on this subject; and whatever they themselves might intend, they have been made use of by infidels to discredit the authority of the sacred historian. It has been replied, that the Bible not being intended to teach philosophy, it is not fair to try it by a philosophical standard. This however cannot be maintained in the case before us, though the observation is pertinent in others, as when the sun is said to have stood still, popular language being adopted o render the Scriptures intelligible. If Moses professes by Divine inspiration to give an account of the manner in which the world was framed, he must describe the facts as they occurred; and if he has assigned a date to its creation out of nothing, that date, if given by an infallible authority, cannot be contradicted by *true* philosophy.

To allow time sufficient for the gradual processes of "precipitation and crystalization," by which the first formations of the solid earth are said to have been effected, others have conceded to the geologists of this class, that an antiquity of the earth much higher than that which appears on the *face* of the Mosaic account may be allowed without contradicting it, and be even deduced from it. They therefore interpret the "*days*" mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis as successive periods of ages, and the evening and morning of those days are made the

If a vast period of time had elapsed since the surface of the earth had assumed its present aspect, it is evident that long ere now the whole of this hill would have been enveloped in its own debris. We have here then a proof of the comparatively short period since the waters left the surface of the globe,—a period not exceeding a few thousand years."

beginnings and ends of those imagined periods. (3) This interpretation is, however, too forced to be admitted in the case of so simple a narrative as that of Moses; and there would be as good a reason for thus extending the duration of the term "day" whenever it occurs in his writings to an indefinite period, to the destruction of all chronological accuracy and of all sobriety of writing. No true friend of revelation will wish to see Moses defended against the assaults of philosophy in a manner which, by obliging us to find a meaning in his writings far remote from the view of general readers, would render them inapplicable to the purpose of ordinary instruction. Beside, if we are to understand the *first* day to have been of indefinite length, a hundred, or a thousand, or a million of years, for instance, why not the *seventh*, the *Sabbath* also? This opinion cannot therefore be consistently maintained, and we must conclude with Rosenmuller, "Dies intelligendi sunt naturales, quorum unusquisque ab unâ vesperâ incipiens, alterâ terminatur; quo modo Judæi, et multi alii antiquissimi populi, dies numerârunt—that we are to understand *natural days;* each of which commencing from one evening is terminated by the next; in which manner the Jews, and many others of the most ancient nations, reckoned days."

By other believers in revelation who have allowed the two principles laid down by geologists to go unquestioned, viz. the original liquidity of the earth, holding the elements of all the subsequent formations in a state of solution; and the necessity of a long course of ages to complete those processes by which the earth should be brought into a fit state, so to speak, for the work of the six days, which in that case must be confined to mere *arrangement;* another, and certainly a less objectionable interpretation of Moses than that which makes his natural days and nights terms for indefinite periods of time, has been adopted. "Does Moses ever say, that when God created the heavens and the earth, he did more at the time alluded to than transform them out of previously existing materials? Or does he ever say, that there was not an interval of many ages between the first act of creation, described in the first verse of the book of Genesis, and said to have been performed at *the beginning;* and those more detailed operations the account of which commences at the second verse, and which are described to us as having been performed in so many days? Or, finally, does he ever make us to understand that the genealogies of man went any farther than to fix the antiquity of the species, and, of consequence, that they left the antiquity

(3) "Most readers have presumed, that every night and day mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis must be strictly confined to the term of twenty-four hours, though there can be no doubt but that Moses never intended any such thing: for how could Moses intend to limit the duration of the day to its present length, before, according to his own showing, the sun had begun to divide the day from the night?" (MANTELL'S *Geology of Sussex.*

of the globe a free subject for the speculations of philosophers? We do not pledge ourselves for the truth of one or all of these suppositions, nor is it necessary we should. It is enough that any of them is infinitely more rational, than the rejection of Christianity in the face of its historical evidence." (CHALMERS's *Evidences of the Christian Revelation.*) "As to the period when this mass was made, Moses only says that it was '*in the beginning*,'—a period this, which might have been a million of years before its arrangement." (MANTELL's *Geology of Sussex.*)

To all these suppositions, though not unsupported by the authority of some great critics, there are considerable objections; and if the difficulty of reconciling geological phenomena with the Mosaic chronology were greater than it appears, none of them ought hastily to be admitted. That creation, in the first verse of Genesis, signifies production out of nothing, and not out of pre-existent matter, though the original word may be used in both senses, is made a matter of faith by the Apostle Paul, who tells us, "*that the things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear*;" μη εκ φαινομενων τα βλεπομενα γεγονεναι; which is sufficient to settle that point. By the same important passage it is also determined, that "the worlds were produced in their *form*, as well as *substance*, instantly out of nothing; or it would not be true, that they were not made of things which do appear." "The apostle states that these things were *not made* out of a *pre-existent matter*; for, if they were, that matter, however extended or modified, must *appear* in that thing into which it is compounded and modified; therefore it could not be said that the things which are *seen*, are not made of things that *appear*: and he shows us also, by these words, that the present mundane fabric was not formed or re-formed from one anterior, as some suppose." (Dr. A CLARKE *in loc.*) No interval of time is allowed in the account of the creation by Moses, between the creating and the framing of the worlds, (that is, the heavens and the earth simply,) so created and framed at once by the word of God. The natural sense too of the phrase "*in the beginning*," is also thus preserved. Thrown back, so to speak, into eternity without reference to *time* it has no meaning, or at best a very obscure one; but connected with *time*, the commencement of our mundane chronology, it has a definite and obvious sense. Moses begins his rockoning from the first creative act;—from the creation of the "heavens and the earth," which was therefore a part of the work of the first natural day. "In the first of these natural days, the whole mineral fabric of this globe was formed at once, of such size and figure, with such properties, in such proportions to space, and with such arrangement of its naterials, as most conduced to the ends for which God created it." (4)

(4) This view is totally inconsistent with the favourite notion of certain modern geologists of a primitive chaotic ocean, containing like that of the heathen

It will now be observed, that if such interpretations of the Mosaic account cannot be allowed, the decisions of Scripture and some of the modern speculations in geology, must be left directly to oppose each other, and that their hostility on this point cannot be softened by the advocates of accommodation. On this account no alarm need be felt by the believer, "*for there is no counsel against the Lord;*" and the progress of true philosophy will ever, in the result, add evidence to the truth of revelation. On the *antiquity of the human race* geology has been compelled already to give its testimony to the accuracy of Moses, and the time is probably not far distant when a similar testimony will be educed from it, as to the *antiquity of the globe.*

In what it now opposes that authority, it may serve to rebuke the dogmatism with which it has disputed the Scriptures, to observe, that, strictly speaking, the science itself is not yet half a century old, and is conversant, not with the surface of the earth only, but with its interior strata, which have been as yet but partially examined. It is therefore too early to theorize with so much confidence; and the eager manner in which its hasty speculations have been taken up against the Mosaic account, can only remind thinking men of the equally eager manner in which the chronologies of China and Hindostan, and the supposed zodiacs of Egyptian temples were once caught at, for the same reason, and we may justly fear from the same motives. It will, indeed, be time enough to enter into a formal defence of Moses, when geologists agree among themselves on leading principles. Cuvier gives rather an amusing account of the odd and contradictory speculations of his scientific brethren; (*Theory*, by JAMIESON, page 41–47;) all of which he of course condemns, and fancies himself, as they all fancied themselves before him, a *successful* theorist. The vehemence with which the two great rival geological sects, the Neptunian and Plutonian, have disputed, to a degree almost unprecedented in the modern age of philo-

poets, the elements of all things; a notion which those who wish to reconcile the account of Genesis with the modern geology have been willing to concede to them, on the ground that Moses has said that the earth was "*without form and void.*" But they have not considered that it was "*the earth,*" not a liquid mass, which is thus characterized; circumfused with water, it is true, but not mingled with it. The LXX render the phrase תהו ובהו, *tohu vabohu*, αορατος, και ακατασκευ αστος, *invisible and unfurnished*,—invisible both because of the darkness, and the water which covered it, and unfurnished, because destitute as yet of vegetables and animals. "It is wonderful," says Rosenmuller, "how so many interpreters could imagine that a chaos was described in the words תהו ובהו, *tohu vabohu.* This notion unquestionably took its origin from the fictions of the Greek and Latin poets, which were transferred, by those interpreters, to Moses." Those fictions ground themselves, we may add, upon traditions received from the earliest times; but the *additions* of poetic fancy are not to be applied to interpret the Scriptures.

sophy, adds but little authority to the decisions of either, inasmuch as the contest is grounded upon an assumed knowledge of facts, and therefore shows that the facts themselves are but indistinctly apprehended in their relations to each other, and that the collection of phenomena on both sides still need to be *arranged* and *systematized*, under the guidance of some calm, and modest, and master mind. (5)

In all these speculations it is observable, that it is assumed at once that philosophy and the Mosaic account are incompatible, and generally without any pains having been taken to understand that account itself. Yet as that account professes to be from one who was both the *author* and the *witness* of the phenomena in question, it might have been supposed that the aid of *testimony* would have been gladly brought to *induction*. An able work has been recently published on this subject by Mr. Granville Penn, who has at once reproved the bold philosophy which excludes the operation of God, and employs itself only among second causes; and has unfolded the Mosaic account of two great revolutions of the earth, one of which took place when "the waters were gathered into one place," and the other at the deluge, "when the fountains of the great deep were broken up," (6) and has applied them to account for those phenomena which have been made to require a theory not to be reconciled with the sacred historian. (7)

Voltaire objected to the philosophy of the Mosaic account, that it has represented a solid firmament to have been formed, in which the stars are fixed as in a wall of adamant. This objection was made in igno-

(5) Mons. L. A. Necker de Saussure, (*Voyage en Ecosse,*) speaking of the disputes between the Wernerians and Huttonians, says, "The former availed themselves of the ascendancy which a more minute study of minerals afforded, to depreciate the observations of their adversaries. They denied the existence of *facts* which the latter had discovered, or they tried to sink their importance Hence it happened that phenomena, important to the natural history of the earth, have never been made known and appreciated as they ought to have been, by geologists most capable of estimating their consequences."

(6) See note A at the end of the chapter.

(7) A scientific journal of great reputation, edited at the Royal Institution, has made an honourable disclaimer of those theories which contradict the Scriptures, and speaks in commendation of the work of Mr. Penn: "We are not inclined, even if we had time, to enter into the comparative merits of the fire and water fancies, miscalled theories; but we have certain old-fashioned prejudices, which, in these *enlightened* days of *skepticism* and *infidelity*, will no doubt be set down as mightily ridiculous, but which, nevertheless, induce us to pause before we acquiesce either in the one or the other. There *is* another mode of accounting for the present state of the earth's structure, on principles at least as rational, in a philosophical light, as either the Plutonian or Neptunian; and inasmuch as it is more consistent with, and founded on, sacred history, incomparably superior. (See Mr. Granville Penn's *Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaical Geologies.*"

rance of the import of the original word rendered *firmamentum* by the Vulgate, and which signifies an *expanse*, referring evidently to the atmosphere. The Septuagint seems to have rendered רקיע by στερεωμα, which signifies a firm *support*, with reference to the office of the atmosphere, to keep up, as effectually as by some solid support, the waters contained in the clouds. The account of Moses is philosophically true the expanded or diffused atmosphere "divides the waters from the waters," the waters in the clouds from the waters of the earth and sea ; and the objection only shows ignorance of the original language, or inattention to it.

It is more difficult to explain that part of the Mosaic relation which represents light as created on the first day, and the sun not until the fourth ; it would be wearisome to give the various solutions which have been offered. One of the most recent, that which supposes the creation of latent heat and light to be spoken of, cannot certainly be maintained ; for the light which on the first day obeyed the sublime fiat, was not latent, but in a state of excitement, and collected itself into a body sufficient to produce the distinction between day and night, which, had it been either in a latent state, or every where diffused in an excited form, could not have been effected. The difficulty, however, so far from discrediting the Mosaic account, affords it a striking confirmation. Had it been compiled under popular notions, it never could have entered the mind of man, drawing all his philosophy from the optical appearances of nature only, that light, sufficient to form the distinction between day and night, should have been created independent of the sun ; and the conclusion therefore is, that the account was received either from inspiration, or from a tradition pure from its original fountain, and which had flowed on to the time of Moses, unmixed with popular corruptions.

"Sir William Herschel," says Mr. Granville Penn, "has discovered that the *body* of the sun is an *opaque substance ;* and that the splendid matter which dispenses to the world *light* and *heat*, is a *luminous atmosphere*, (*Phil. Trans.* for 1795, p. 46 ; and for 1801, p. 265,) attached to its surface, figuratively, though not physically, as *flame* is attached to the wick of a *lamp* or a *torch*. So that the *creation of the sun*, as a part of '*the host of heaven*,' does not necessarily imply the *creation of light ;* and, conversely, the *creation of light* does not necessarily imply the *creation of the body of the sun*. In the first creation of '*the heaven and the earth*,' therefore, not the *planetary orbs* only, but the *solar orb itself*, was created *in darkness ;* awaiting the light, which, by one simple Divine operation, was to be communicated at once to all. When then the almighty *Word*, in commanding *light*, commanded the *first illumination* of the solar atmosphere, its new light was immediately caught, and reflected throughout space, by all the members of the planetary system. And well may we imagine, that, in that *first*, sudden, and magnificent illumi-

nation of the universe, '*the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy,*'" Job xxxviii, 7.

But if the discovery of Herschel be real, the passage just quoted supposes the solar orb to have been invested with its luminous atmosphere on the first day, and the difficulty in question still remains untouched, though it admirably explains how "the heavens," that is, our solar system, should be created by one act, and yet that it should require a second fiat to invest them with light. Another way of meeting the difficulty is, that the lights which are said to have been *made* on the fourth day, were not on that day actually *created*, but determined to certain uses. Thus Rosenmuller: "If any one who is conversant with the genius of the Hebrew, and free from any previous bias of his judgment, will read the words of this article in their natural connection, he will immediately perceive that they import *the direction or determination of the heavenly bodies to certain uses which they were to supply to the earth.* The words יהי מאורת, are not to be separated from the rest, or to be rendered *fiant luminaria,—let there be lights;* that is, *let lights be made;* but rather, *let lights be*, that is, *serve in the expanse of heaven—inserviant in expanso cœlorum—for distinguishing between day and night; and let them be*, or *serve, for signs, &c.* For we are to observe, that the verb היה *to be*, in construction with the prefix ל, *for*, is generally employed to express the *direction* or *determination of a thing to an end;* and not the *production of the thing:* e. g. Num. x, 31; Zech. viii, 19, and in many other places."

To this there is an obvious objection, that it does not assign any *work* properly speaking, to the fourth day; and how, when neither *being* was on that day given to them, nor any change effected in their qualities or relations, the lights could be determined to certain uses except by giving information of their uses to men, cannot be conceived; and as yet man was not created. Mr. Penn indeed supposes that the heavenly bodies had been hid from the earth till the fourth day by vapours; that then they were for the first time dispelled; and, as he eloquently says, "the amazing *calendar of the heavens*, ordained to serve for the notation of time in all human concerns, civil and religious, so long as time and man should continue, was therefore to be now first unfolded to the earth, with all the visible *indices of time* by which its measures were thereafter to be marked, distinguished, and computed; and the splendid *cause*, which had hitherto issued its effect of light through an interposed *medium*, was to dispense that light to the earth immediately, in the full manifestation of its effulgence."

The notion, that the earth was from the first to the fourth day enveloped with vapour, so that, as in a fog, the distinction of day and night was manifest, though the celestial orbs were not visible, is however assumed, and does not appear quite philosophical and though the dispersion of

these vapours from the atmosphere assigns a *work* to the fourth day, it scarcely appears to be of sufficient importance to accord with the language of the history. It would be better to suppose with others, that on the fourth day the annual motion of the earth commenced, which till then merely turned upon its axis, and with it the annual motion of the moon and planets in their orbits,—that wonderfully rapid and yet regular flight of the heavenly bodies which so awfully displays the power of the great Artificer in communicating, and constantly feeding, the mighty impulse, and which is so essential to the measurement of time, that without it the "*lights*" could not *be*, or *serve*, "for signs and for seasons," and "for" *solemn* "days," religious festivals, and the commemoration of important events, and "for years." A sublime work is thus assigned to the fourth day, and the difficulty seems mainly to be removed: but whether some violence is not done to the letter of the account, may still be doubted; and the difficulty which proves, as we have seen, if admitted in its full force, more *for* the Mosaic relation than *against* it, had better be retained than one iota of the strict grammatical and contextual meaning of Scripture be suffered to pass away.

Several objections have been made at different times to the Mosaic account of the deluge. The fact however is not only preserved in the traditions of all nations, as we have already seen; but after all the philosophical arguments which were formerly urged against it, philosophy has at length acknowledged that the present surface of the earth must have been submerged under water. "Not only," says Kirwan, "in every region of Europe, but also of both the old and new continents, immense quantities of marine shells, either dispersed or collected, have been discovered." This and several other facts seem to prove, that at least a great part of the present earth was, before the last general convulsion to which it has been subjected, the bed of an ocean which, at that time, was withdrawn from it. Other facts seem also to prove with sufficient evidence, that this was not a gradual retirement of the waters which once covered the parts now inhabited by men; but a *violent* one, such as may be supposed from the brief, but emphatic relation of Moses. The violent action of water has left its traces in various undisputed phenomena. "Stratified mountains of various heights exist in different parts of Europe, and of both continents, in and between whose strata various substances of marine, and some vegetables of *terrestrial* origin repose either in their natural state, or petrified." (KIRWAN'S *Geological Essays.*) "To overspread the plains of the arctic circle with the shells of Indian seas, and with the bodies of elephants and rhinoceri, surrounded by masses of submarine vegetation; to accumulate on a single spot, as at La Bolca, in promiscuous confusion, the marine productions of the four quarters of the globe; what conceivable instrument would be efficacious but the rush of mighty waters?" (GISBORNE'S "*Testimony of Natural*

Theology," &c.) These facts, about which there is no dispute, and which are acknowledged by the advocates of each of the prevailing geological theories, give a sufficient attestation to the deluge of Noah, in which "*the fountains of the great deep were broken up*," and from which precisely such phenomena might be expected to follow. To this may be added, though less decisive in proof, yet certainly strong as presumptive evidence, that the very *aspect* of the earth's surface exhibits interesting marks both of the violent action, and the rapid subsidence of waters; as well as affords a most interesting instance of the Divine goodness in converting what was *ruin* itself, into *utility*, and *beauty*. The great frame work of the varied surface of the habitable earth was probably laid by a more powerful agency than that of water; either when on the third day the waters under the heavens were gathered into one place, and the crust of the primitive earth was broken down to receive them, so that "*the dry land might appear*;" or by those mighty convulsions which appear to have accompanied the general deluge; but the *rounding*, so to speak, of what was rugged, where the substance was yielding, and the graceful *undulations* of hill and dale which so frequently present themselves, were probably effected by the retiring waters. The flood has passed away; but the soils which it deposited remain; and the valleys through which its last streams were drawn off to the ocean, with many an eddy and sinuous course, still exist, exhibiting visible proofs of its agency, and impressed with forms so adapted to the benefit of man, and often so gratifying to the finest taste, that when the flood "*turned*," it may be said to have "*left a blessing behind it*."

Thus the objections once made to the *fact* of a general deluge have been greatly weakened by the progress of philosophical knowledge; and may indeed be regarded as nearly given up, like the former notion of the high antiquity of the race of men, founded on the Chinese and Egyptian chronologies and pretended histories. Philosophy has even at last found out that there is sufficient water in the ocean, if called forth, to overflow the highest mountains to the height given by Moses, a conclusion which it once stoutly denied. Keill formerly computed that twenty-eight oceans would be necessary for that purpose, but we are now informed "that a farther progress in mathematical and physical knowledge has shown the different seas and oceans to contain at least forty-eight times more water than they were then supposed to do; and that the mere raising of the temperature of the whole body of the ocean to a degree no greater than marine animals live in, in the shallow seas between the tropics, would so expand it as more than to produce the height above the mountains stated in the Mosaic account." As to the deluge of Noah, therefore, infidelity has almost entirely lost the aid of philosophy in framing objections to the Scriptures.

The dimensions of the ark, and the preservation of the animals con-

tained in it, are however still the subject of occasional ridicule, though with little foundation. Dr. Hales proves the ark to have been of the burthen of 42,413 tons, and asks, "Can we doubt of its being sufficient to contain eight persons, and about two hundred, or two hundred and fifty pair of four-footed animals, (a number to which, according to M. Buffon, all the various distinct species may be reduced,) together with all the subsistence necessary for a twelvemonth, with the fowls of the air, and such reptiles and insects as cannot live under water? All these various animals were controlled by the power of God, whose special agency is supposed in the whole transaction, and 'the lion was made to lie down with the kid.'"

Whether Noah was commanded to bring with him, into the ark, a pair of *all* living creatures, zoologically and numerically considered, has been doubted; and as during the long period between the creation and the flood, animals must have spread themselves over a great part of the antediluvian earth, and certain animals would, as now, probably become indigenous to certain climates, the pairs saved must in such cases have travelled from immense distances. Of such marches no intimation is given in the history; and this seems to render it probable that the animals which Noah was "*to bring with him*" into the ark, were the animals, clean and unclean, of the country in which he dwelt, and which, from the evident capacity of the ark, must have been in great variety and number. The terms used, it is true, are universal; and it is satisfactory to know that if the largest sense of them be taken, there was ample accommodation in the ark. Nevertheless, universal terms in Scripture are not always to be taken mathematically; and in the vision of Peter, the phrase παντα τα τετραποδα της γης—"*all the four-footed beasts of the earth*," must be understood of "*varii generis quadrupedes*," as Schleusner paraphrases it. In this case we may easily account for the exuviæ of animals, whose species no longer exist, and which have been discovered in various places. The number of such extinct species has probably been greatly overrated by Cuvier; but of the fact to a considerable extent, there can be no doubt. It is also to be remarked, that we are not obliged to go to the limited interpretation of the command to Noah respecting the animals to be preserved in the ark, in order to account for this fact; for without adopting the totally unscriptural theory of a former world; or of more *general* revolutions of the earth than the Scriptures state, (partial ones affecting large districts may have taken place,) we know of no principle in the word of God which should lead us to conclude, that all the animals which God at first created should be preserved to the end of time. In many countries whole species of wild animals have perished by the progress of cultivation, a process which must ultimately produce the utter extinction of the same species every where. The offices which many other creatures were designed to

fulfil in the economy of nature, may have terminated with the new circumstances in which the parts they have chiefly inhabited are placed. So it might be before the flood, and in many places since. Thus then the exuviæ of extinct species may be expected to present themselves. But in addition to this, if we suppose that during the antediluvian period, animals of various kinds had located themselves in different portions of the ocean, and in different climates of the primitive earth; and that, of the terrestrial animals become indigenous to parts of the earth distant from Noah and the inhabited world, some species were not received into the ark, their remains will also occasionally be discovered, and present the proof of modes of animated existence not now to be paralleled. Among fossil remains it has been made a matter of surprise that no human skeletons, or but few, and those in recent formations, have been found. The reason however is not difficult to furnish. If we admit that the present continents were the bottom of the antediluvian ocean, and that the ocean has changed its place; then the former habitations of men are submerged, and their remains are beyond human reach. If any part of the antediluvian earth still remains, it is probably that region to which Noah and his family were restored from the ark; and in those countries, geology has not commenced its *interior* researches, and such fossil remains may there exist. There is this difference between the human race and the inferior animals, that while the latter for near two thousand years were roaming over the wide earth, the former confined themselves to one region; for those extravagant calculations as to the population of the earth at the time of the flood, which some have made, cannot be maintained on the authority of Scripture, on which they professedly rest; since it is certain that they represent Noah as a preacher of righteousness to the whole existing "*world*" of men, during the time the ark was preparing, one hundred and twenty years. The human race must therefore have lived, however populous, in the same region, and been either in personal communication with him, or within reach of the distinct report of his doctrines, and of that great and public act of his faith, the preparing of the ark, "*by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*" Even Cuvier gives it as a reason why human skeletons are not found in a fossil state, "that the place which men then inhabited may have sunk into the abyss, and that the bones of that destroyed race may yet remain buried under the bottom of some actual seas."

Such are the leading evidences of the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and of the religious system which they unfold, from the first promise made to the first fallen man, to its perfected exhibition in the New Testament. The Christian will review these solid and immovable

foundations of his faith with unutterable joy. They leave none of his moral interests unprovided for in time; they set before him a certain and a felicitous immortality. The skeptic and the infidel may be entreated, by every compassionate feeling, to a more serious consideration of the evidences of this Divine system, and the difficulties and hopelessness of their own; and they ought to be reminded, in the words of a modern writer, "If Christianity be true, it is *tremendously* true." Let them turn to an insulted, but yet a merciful Saviour, who even now prays for his blasphemers, in the words he once addressed to Heaven in behalf of his murderers, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO!

NOTE A.—Page 252.

FROM the work referred to in the text, the following extracts will be read with interest.

Mr. Penn first controverts the notion of those geologists who think that the earth was originally a fluid mass; and as they plead the authority of Sir I. Newton, who is said to have concluded from its figure, (an *obtuse spheroid*,) that it was originally a yielding mass, Mr. Penn shows that this was only put hypothetically by him; and that he has laid it down expressly as his belief, not that there was first a chaotic ocean, and then a gradual process of first formations, but that "God at the beginning formed all material things of such figures and properties as most conduced to the end for which he formed them;" and that he judged it to be unphilosophical to ascribe them to any mediate or secondary cause, such as laws of nature operating in a chaos. Mr. Penn then proceeds to show, that, though what geologists call first formations may have the appearance of having been produced by a *process*, say of crystalization, or any other, that is no proof that they were not formed by the immediate act of God, as we are taught in the Scriptures; and he confirms this by examples from the *first formations* in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and contends that the first formations of the mineral kingdom must come under the same rule. "If a bone of the *first created man* now remained, and were mingled with other bones pertaining to a *generated race*; and if it were to be submitted to the inspection and examination of an anatomist, what opinion and judgment would its *sensible phenomena* suggest, respecting *the mode* of its *first formation*, and what would be his conclusion? If he were unapprized of its true origin, his mind would *see nothing* in its *sensible phenomena* but the laws of *ossification*; just as the mineral geology '*sees nothing* in the *details* of the formation of minerals, but *precipitations*, *crystalizations*, and *dissolutions*.' (*D'Aubuisson*, i, pp. 326–7.) He would therefore naturally pronounce of this bone, as of all the other bones, that its '*fibres were originally soft*' until, in the shelter of the maternal womb, it acquired '*the hardness of a cartilage, and then of bone*,' that this effect '*was not produced at once, or in a very short time*,' but '*by degrees*;' that, after birth, it increased in hardness '*by the continual addition of ossifying matter, until it ceased to grow at all.*'

"*Physically true* as this reasoning would appear, it would nevertheless be *morally* and *really false*. Why would it be false? Because it concluded, from *mere sensible phenomena*, to the *certainty of a fact* which could not be established by the evidence of sensible phenomena *alone*; namely, *the mode* of the first formation of the substance of created bone.

"Let us proceed from animal to *vegetable matter;* and let us consider the *first created tree*, under which the created man first reposed, and from which he gathered his first fruit. That tree must have had a *stem*, or *trunk*, through which the juices were conveyed from the root to the fruit, and by which it was able to sustain the branches upon which the fruit grew.

"If a portion of this *created tree* now remained, and if a section of its wood were to be mingled with other sections of *propagated trees*, and submitted to the inspection and examination of a naturalist; what opinion and judgment would its *sensible phenomena* suggest to him, respecting *the mode* of its *first formation;* and what would be his conclusion? If he were unapprized of its true origin, his mind would *see nothing* in its *sensible phenomena*, but the laws of *lignification;* just as the mineral geologist '*sees nothing* in the *details* of the formations of primitive rock, but *precipitations, crystalizations*, and *dissolutions.*' He would therefore naturally pronounce of it as of all the other sections of wood: that its '*fibres*,' when they first issued from the seed, '*were soft and herbaceous;*' that they '*did not suddenly pass to the hardness of perfect wood*,' but, '*after many years;*' that the hardness of their folds, '*which indicate the growth of each year*,' was therefore effected only '*by degrees;*' and that, 'since *nature* does nothing but by a progressive course, it is not surprising that its substance acquired its hardness *only by little and little.*'

"*Physically true* as the naturalist would here appear to reason; yet his reasoning, like that of the anatomist, would be *morally* and *really false*. And why would it be false? For the same reason; because he concluded from *mere sensible phenomena*, to the *certainty of a fact* which could not be established by the evidence of sensible phenomena *alone;* namely, *the mode* of the first formation of the substance of created wood.

"There only now remains to be considered, the *third*, or *mineral* kingdom of this terrestrial system; and it appears probable, to reason and philosophy, by *prima facie* evidence, that the principle determining the mode of first formations, in *two parts* of this *three-fold* division of matter, must have equal authority in this *third part*. And indeed, after the closest investigation of the subject, we can discover no ground whatever for supposing that this *third* part is exempted from the authority of that *common principle;* or that *physics* are a whit more competent to dogmatize concerning the *mode* of first formations, from the evidence of phenomena alone, in the *mineral* kingdom, than they have been found to be in the *animal* or *vegetable;* or to affirm, from the *indications* of the former, that the mode of its first formations was more gradual and tardy than those of the other two.

"Let us try this point, by proceeding with our comparison; and let us consider the first created *rock*, as we have considered the first created *bone* and *wood;* and let us ask, *what is rock*, in its nature and composition?

"To this question, mineralogy replies: 'By the word *rock*, we mean every *mineral mass* of such bulk as to be regarded an *essential part* of the structure of the globe. (*D'Aubuisson*, i, p. 272.) We understand by the word *mineral*, a natural body, inorganic, solid, homogeneous, that is, composed of integrant molecules of the same substance. (*D'Aubuisson*, i, p. 271.) We may, perhaps, pronounce that a mass is *essential*, when its displacement would occasion the *downfall* of other masses which are placed upon it. (*D'Aubuisson*, i, p. 272.) Such are those lofty and ancient mountains, *the first and most solid bones*, as it were, of this globe,—*les premiers, les plus solides ossemens*,—which have merited the name of *primitive*, because, scorning all support and all foreign mixture, they repose always upon bases similar to themselves, and comprise within their substance no matter but

of the same nature. (*Saussure, Voyages des Alps, Disc. Prél.* pp. 6, 7.) These are the primordial mountains; which traverse our continents in various directions, rising above the clouds, separating the basins of rivers one from another; serving, by means of their eternal snows, as reservoirs for feeding the springs, and forming in some measure the *skeleton*, or, as it were, the *rough frame work* of the earth. (*Cuvier*, sec. 7, p. 39.) These primitive masses are stamped with the character of a formation altogether crystaline, as if they were really the product of a tranquil precipitation.' (*D'Aubuisson*, ii, p. 5.)

"Had the mineral geology contented itself with this simple mineralogical statement, we should have thus argued concerning the crystaline phenomena of the first mineral formations; conformably to the principles which we have recognized. As the bone of the first man, and the wood of the first tree, whose solidity was essential for 'giving shape, firmness, and support,' to their respective systems, were not, and could not have been, formed by the gradual processes of *ossification* and *lignification*, of which they nevertheless must have exhibited the sensible phenomena, or apparent indications; so, reason directs us to conclude, that *primitive rock*, whose *solidity* was equally essential for giving shape, firmness, and support to the mineral system of this globe, was not, and could not have been, formed by the gradual process of *precipitation* and *crystalization*, notwithstanding any sensible phenomena, apparently indicative of those processes, which it may exhibit; but that in the mineral kingdom, as in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, the creating agent *anticipated* in his formations, by an immediate act, *effects*, whose sensible phenomena could not determine the mode of their formation; because the *real mode* was in direct contradiction to the apparent indications of the phenomena.

"But the mineral geology has not contented itself with that simple mineralogical statement; nor drawn the conclusion which we have drawn, in conformity with the principles, and in observance of the rules, of Newton's philosophy. It affirms, 'that the *characters* by which geology is written in the book of nature in which it is to be studied, are *minerals*;' (*D'Aubuisson, Disc. Prél.* p. 29;) and it '*sees nothing*' in that book of nature but '*precipitations, crystalizations*, and *dissolutions*;' and therefore, because it *sees nothing else*, it concludes without hesitation, from *crystaline phenomena* to *actual crystalization*. Thus, by attempting the impossibility of deducing a *universal principle*, viz. *the mode of first formations*, from the analysis of *a single individual*, viz. *mineral matter*, separate from co-ordinate *animal* and *vegetable matter;* and concluding from that defective analysis, to the *general law* of first formations; it set out with inadequate light, and it is no wonder that it ended in absolute darkness; for such is its *elemental chaos*, and its *chemical precipitation of this globe:* a doctrine so nearly resembling the exploded *atomic philosophy* of the Epicurean school, that it requires a very close and laborious inspection to discover a single feature, by which they may be distinguished from each other."

This argument is largely supported and illustrated in the work; and thus by referring first formations of every kind to an immediate act of God, those immense periods of time which geology demands for its chemical processes, are rendered unnecessary. From *first formations*, Mr. Penn proceeds to oppose the notion that the earth has undergone many general revolutions, and thinks that all geological phenomena may be better explained by the Mosaic record, which confines those general revolutions to two. Mr. Penn's course of observation will be seen by the following recapitulation of the second and third parts of his work:—

"That this globe, so constructed at its origin, has undergone *two*, and *only two*,

general changes or revolutions of its substance; each of which was caused by the immediate will, intelligence, and power of GOD, exercised upon the work which he had formed, and directing the laws or agencies which he had ordained within it.

"That, by the FIRST change or revolution, [that of gathering the waters into one place, and making the dry land appear,] one portion or division of the surface of the globe was suddenly and violently fractured and depressed, in order to form, in the first instance, a receptacle or bed for the waters universally diffused over that surface, and to expose the other portion, that it might become a dwelling for animal life; but yet, with an ulterior design, that the receptacle of the waters should eventually become the chief theatre of animal existence, by the portion first exposed experiencing a similar fracture and depression, and thus becoming in its turn, the receptacle of the same waters; which should then be transfused into it, leaving their former receptacle void and dry.

"That this FIRST revolution took place before the existence, that is, before the creation of any organized beings.

"That the sea, collected into this vast fractured cavity of the globe's surface, continued to occupy it during 1656 years [from the creation to the deluge;] during which long period of time, its waters acted in various modes, *chemical* and *mechanical*, upon the several soils and fragments which formed its bed; and marine organic matter, animal and vegetable, was generated and accumulated in vast abundance.

"That, after the expiration of those 1656 years, it pleased God, in a SECOND revolution, to execute his ulterior design, by repeating the amazing operation by which he had exposed the first earth; and by the disruption and depression of that first earth below the level of the bed of the first sea, to produce a new bed, into which the waters descended from their former bed, leaving it to become the theatre of the future generations of mankind.

"That THIS PRESENT EARTH *was* THAT FORMER BED.

"That it must, therefore, necessarily exhibit manifest and universal evidences of the vicissitudes which it has undergone; viz. of the vast apparent ruin occasioned by its first violent disruption and depression; of the presence and operation of the marine fluid during the long interval which succeeded; and, of the action and effects of that fluid in its ultimate retreat.

"Within the limits of this *general scheme*, all speculations must be confined which would aspire to the quality of *sound geology;* yet vast and sublime is the field which it lays open, to exercise the intelligence and experience of sober and philosophical mineralogy and chemistry. Upon this legitimate ground, those many valuable writers, who have unwarily lent their science to uphold and propagate the vicious doctrine of a *chaotic geogony*, may geologize with full security; and may there concur to promote that true advancement of *natural* philosophy, which Newton holds to be inseparable from a proportionate advancement of the *moral*. They must thus at length succeed in perfecting a *true philosophical geology;* which never can exist, unless the principle of Newton form the *foundation*, and the relation of Moses the *working plan*."

PART SECOND.

DOCTRINES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

CHAPTER I.

The Existence of God.

The *Divine authority* of those writings which are received by Christians as a revelation of infallible truth, having been established, our next step is seriously, and with simplicity of mind, to examine their contents, and to collect from them that ample information on religious and moral subjects which they profess to contain, and in which it had become necessary that the world should be supernaturally instructed. Agreeably to a principle which has already been laid down, I shall endeavour, as in the case of any other record, to exhibit their meaning by the application of those plain rules of interpretation which have been established for such purposes by the common agreement of the sober part of mankind. All the assistance within reach from critics, commentators, and divines, shall however be resorted to; for, though the water can only be drawn pure from the sacred fountain itself, we yet owe it to many of these guides, that they have successfully directed us to the openings through which it breaks, and led the way into the depth of the stream.

The doctrine which the first sentence in this Divine revelation unfolds is, that *there is a* God, *the* Creator *of heaven and earth*; and as this is fundamental to the whole scheme of *duty*, *promise*, and *hope*, which the books of Scripture successively unfold and explain, it demands our earliest consideration.

In three distinct ways do the sacred writers furnish us with information on this great and essential subject, the existence and the character of God;—from the *names* by which he is designated; from the *actions* ascribed to him; and from the *attributes* with which he is invested in their invocations and praises: and in those lofty descriptions of his nature which, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have recorded for the instruction of the world. These attributes will be afterward particularly considered; but the impression of the general view of the Divine character, as thus revealed, is too important to be omitted.

The *names* of God as recorded in Scripture, convey at once ideas of overwhelming greatness and glory, mingled with that awful mysteriousness with which, to all finite minds, and especially to the minds of mortals, the Divine essence and mode of existence must ever be invested. Though One, he is אלהים, Elohim, Gods, *persons adorable*. He

is יהוה, JEHOVAH, *self existing*, אל, EL, *strong, powerful*; אהיה, EHIEH, *I am, I will be, self existence, independency, all-sufficiency, immutability, eternity*; שדי, SHADDAI, *almighty, all-sufficient*; אדן, ADON, *Supporter, Lord, Judge.* These are among the adorable appellatives of God which are scattered throughout the revelation which he has been pleased to make of himself: but on one occasion he was pleased more particularly to declare "his *name*," that is, such of the qualities and attributes of the Divine nature, as mortals are the most interested in knowing; and to unfold, not only his natural, but those also of his moral attributes by which his conduct toward his creatures is regulated. "*And the Lord passed by and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation,*" Exod. xxxiv. This is the most ample and particular description of the character of God, as given by himself in the sacred records; and the import of the several titles by which he has thus in his infinite condescension manifested himself, has been thus exhibited. He is not only JEHOVAH, *self existent*, and EL, *the strong or mighty God*; but "רחום, ROCHUM, *the merciful being*, who is full of tenderness and compassion. חנון, CHANUN, *the gracious one*, he whose nature is goodness itself—the loving God. ארך אפים, EREC APAYIM, *long suffering*, the being who, because of his tenderness, is not easily irritated, but suffers long and is kind. רב, RAB, *the great or mighty one.* חסד, CHESED, *the bountiful Being*; he who is exuberant in his beneficence. אמת, EMETH, *the truth*, or *true one*, he alone who can neither deceive nor be deceived. נצר חסד, NOTSER CHESED, *the preserver of bountifulness*, he whose beneficence never ends, keeping mercy for thousands of generations, showing compassion and mercy while the world endures. נשא עון ופשע וחטאה, NOSE *âvon vapeshâ vechataah, he who bears away iniquity, transgression and sin*; properly the REDEEMER, the PARDONER the FORGIVER, the Being whose prerogative it is to forgive sin, and save the soul. נקה לא ינקה, NAKEH *lo yinnakeh, the righteous Judge*, who distributes justice with an impartial hand. And פקד עון, PAKED, *âvon, &c, he who visits iniquity*, he who punishes transgressors, and from whose justice no sinner can escape: the God of retributive and vindictive justice." (*Dr. A. Clarke in loc.*)

The second means by which the Scriptures convey to us the knowledge of God, is by the *actions* which they ascribe to him. They contain indeed the important record of *his* dealings with men in every age which is comprehended within the limit of the sacred history; and, by prophetic declaration, they also exhibit the *principles* on which he will govern the world to the end of time; so that the whole course of

the Divine administration may be considered as exhibiting a singularly illustrative comment upon those attributes of his nature, which, in their abstract form, are contained in such declarations as those which have been just quoted. The first act ascribed to God is that of *creating* the heavens and the earth out of nothing; and by his fiat alone arranging their parts, and peopling them with living creatures. By this were manifested—his *eternity and self existence*, as he who creates must be before all creatures, and he who gives being to others can himself derive it from none; his *almighty power*, shown both in the act of creation, and in the number and vastness of the objects so produced. his *wisdom*, in their arrangement, and in their fitness to their respective ends: and his *goodness* as the whole tended to the happiness of *sentient* beings. The foundations of his natural and moral government are also made manifest by his creative acts. In what he made out of nothing he had an absolute right and prerogative of ordering and disposal; so that to alter or destroy his own work, and to prescribe the laws by which the intelligent and rational part of his creatures should be governed, are *rights* which none can question. Thus on the one hand his character of *Lord* or *Governor* is established, and on the other our duty of lowly *homage* and absolute *obedience*.

Agreeably to this, as soon as man was created, he was placed under a rule of conduct. Obedience was to be followed with the continuance of the Divine favour; transgression, with death. The event called forth new manifestations of the character of God. His tender MERCY, in the compassion showed to the fallen pair; his JUSTICE, in forgiving them only in the view of a *satisfaction* to be hereafter offered to his justice by an innocent representative of the sinning race; his LOVE to that race, in giving his own Son to become this *Redeemer*, and in the fulness of time to die for the sins of the whole world; and his HOLINESS, in connecting with this provision for the pardon of man the means of restoring him to a sinless state, and to the obliterated image of God in which he had been created. Exemplifications of the Divine MERCY are traced from age to age, in his establishing his own worship among men, and remitting the punishment of individual and national offences in answer to prayer offered from penitent hearts, and in dependence upon the typified or actually offered universal sacrifice:—of his CONDESCENSION, in stooping to the cases of individuals; in his dispensations both of providence and grace, by showing respect to the poor and humble; and, principally, by the incarnation of God in the form of a servant, admitting men into familiar and friendly intercourse with himself, and then entering into heaven to be their patron and advocate, until they should be received unto the same glory, "and so be for ever with the Lord"—of his strictly RIGHTEOUS GOVERNMENT, in the destruction of the old world, the cities of the plain, the nations of Canaan, and all ancient

states, upon their "filling up the measure of their iniquities;" and, to show that "he will *by no means clear the guilty*;" in the numerous and severe punishments inflicted even upon the chosen seed of Abraham, because of their transgressions:—of his LONG SUFFERING, in frequent warnings, delays, and *corrective* judgments, inflicted upon individuals and nations, before sentence of utter excision and destruction:—of FAITHFULNESS and TRUTH, in the fulfilment of promises, often many ages after they were given, as in the promises to Abraham respecting the possession of the land of Canaan by his seed; and in all the "*promises made to the fathers*" respecting the advent, vicarious death, and illustrious offices of the *Christ*, the Saviour of the world:—of his IMMUTABILITY, in the constant and unchanging laws and principles of his government, which remain to this day precisely the same, in every thing *universal*, as when first promulgated, and have been the rule of his conduct in all places as well as through all time:—of his PRESCIENCE of future events, manifested by the predictions of Scripture; and of the depth and stability of his COUNSEL, as illustrated in that plan and purpose of bringing back a revolted world to obedience and felicity, which we find steadily kept in view in the Scriptural history of the acts of God in former ages; which is still the *end* toward which all his dispensations bend, however wide and mysterious their sweep; and which they will finally accomplish, as we learn from the *prophetic history* of the future, contained in the Old and New Testaments.

Thus the course of Divine operation in the world has from age to age been a manifestation of the Divine *character*, continually receiving new and stronger illustrations to the completion of the Christian revelation by the ministry of Christ and his inspired followers, and still placing itself in brighter light and more impressive aspects as the scheme of human redemption runs on to its consummation. From all the acts of God as recorded in the Scriptures, we are taught that he *alone* is God; that he is present every where to sustain and govern all things; that his wisdom is infinite, his counsel settled, and his power irresistible; that he is holy, just, and good; the Lord and the Judge, but the Father and the Friend of man.

More at large do we learn what God is, from the declarations of the inspired writings.

As to his SUBSTANCE, that "*God is a Spirit.*" As to his DURATION, that "*from everlasting to everlasting* he is God;" "*the King, eternal, immortal, invisible.*" That, after all the manifestations he has made of himself, he is from the infinite perfection and glory of his nature, INCOMPREHENSIBLE; "*Lo, these are but parts of his ways, and how little a portion is heard of him!*" "*Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.*" That he is UNCHANGEABLE. "*the Father of Lights with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*" That "*he is the fountain of*

LIFE," and the only independent Being in the universe, "*who only hath immortality.*" That every other being, however exalted, has its existence from him; "*for by him were all things created, which are in heaven and in earth, whether they are visible or invisible.*" That the existence of every thing is upheld by him, no creature being for a moment independent of his support; "*by him all things consist,*" "*upholding all things by the word of his power.*" That he is OMNIPRESENT: "*Do not I fill heaven and earth with my presence, saith the Lord?*" That he is OMNISCIENT: "*All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*" That he is the absolute LORD and OWNER of all things: "*The heavens, even the heaven of heavens, are thine, and all the parts of them.*" "*The earth is thine, and the fulness thereof, the world and them that dwell therein.*" "*He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.*" That his PROVIDENCE extends to the minutest objects: "*The hairs of your head are all numbered.*" "*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.*" That he is a being of unspotted PURITY and perfect RECTITUDE: "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts!*" "*A God of truth, and in whom is no iniquity.*" "*Of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.*" That he is JUST in the administration of his government: "*Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?*" "*Clouds and darkness are round about him; judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne.*" That his WISDOM is unsearchable: "*O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*" And, finally, that he is GOOD and MERCIFUL: "*Thou art good, and thy mercy endureth for ever.*" "*His tender mercy is over all his works.*" "*God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.*" "*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.*" "*God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*"

Under these deeply awful, but consolatory views, do the Scriptures present to us the supreme object of our worship and trust, dwelling upon each of the above particulars with inimitable sublimity and beauty of language, and with an inexhaustible variety of illustration; nor can we compare these views of the Divine nature with the conceptions of the most enlightened of pagans, without feeling how much reason we have for everlasting gratitude, that a revelation so *explicit*, and so *comprehensive*, should have been made to us on a subject which only a revelation from God himself could have made known. It is thus that Christian philosophers, even when they do not use the language of the Scriptures, are able to speak on this great and mysterious doctrine in language so clear, and with conceptions so noble; in a manner too so *equable*, so

different to the sages of antiquity, who, if at any time they approach the truth, when speaking of the Divine nature, never fail to mingle with it some essentially erroneous or grovelling conception. "By the word GOD," says Dr. Barrow, "we mean a Being of infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, the creator and the governor of all things, to whom the great attributes of eternity and independency, omniscience and immensity, perfect holiness and purity, perfect justice and veracity, complete happiness, glorious majesty, and supreme right of dominion, belong; and to whom the highest veneration, and most profound submission and obedience, are due." (*Barrow on the Creed.*) "Our notion of Deity," says Bishop Pearson, "doth expressly signify a Being or Nature of infinite perfection; and the infinite perfection of a Being or Nature consists in this, that it be absolutely and essentially necessary; an actual Being of itself; and potential or causative of all beings beside itself, independent from any other, upon which all things else depend, and by which all things else are governed." (*Pearson on the Creed.*) "God is a Being, and not any kind of being; but a *substance*, which is the foundation of other beings. And not only a substance, but *perfect*. Yet many beings are perfect in their kind, yet limited and finite. But God is absolutely, fully, and every way infinitely perfect; and therefore above spirits, above angels who are perfect comparatively. God's infinite perfection *includes* all the attributes, even the most excellent. It *excludes* all dependency, borrowed existence, composition, corruption, mortality, contingency, ignorance, unrighteousness, weakness, misery, and all imperfections whatever. It includes necessity of being, independency, perfect unity, simplicity, immensity, eternity, immortality; the most perfect life, knowledge, wisdom, integrity, power, glory, bliss, and all these in the highest degree. We cannot pierce into the secrets of this eternal Being. Our reason comprehends but little of him, and when it can proceed no farther, *faith* comes in, and we believe far more than we can understand: and this our belief is not contrary to reason; but reason itself dictates unto us that we must believe far more of God than it can inform us of." (*Lawson's Theo-Politica.*) To these we may add an admirable passage from Sir Isaac Newton: "The word GOD frequently signifies *Lord;* but every lord is not God; it is the dominion of a spiritual Being or Lord, that constitutes God; true dominion, true God; supreme, the supreme; feigned, the false God. From such true dominion it follows that the true God is living, intelligent, and powerful; and from his other perfections that he is supreme, or supremely perfect; he is eternal and infinite; omnipotent and omniscient; that is, he endures from eternity to eternity; and is present from infinity to infinity. He governs all things that exist, and knows all things that are to be known: he is not eternity or infinity but eternal and infinite; he is not duration or space, but he endures and is present; he endures always, and is present every where; he is omni

present, not only virtually, but also substantially; for power without substance cannot subsist. All things are contained and move in him; but without any mutual passion; he suffers nothing from the motions of bodies; nor do they undergo any resistance from his omnipresence. It is confessed that God exists necessarily, and by the same necessity he exists always and every where. Hence also he must be perfectly similar, all eye, all ear, all arm, all the power of perceiving, understanding, and acting; but after a manner not at all corporeal, after a manner not like that of men, after a manner wholly to us unknown. He is destitute of all body, and all bodily shape; and therefore cannot be seen, heard, or touched; nor ought he to be worshipped under the representation of any thing corporeal. We have ideas of the attributes of God, but do not know the substance of even any thing: we see only the figures and colours of bodies, hear only sounds, touch only the outward surfaces smell only odours, and taste tastes; and do not, cannot, by any sense, or reflex act, know their inward substances: and much less can we have any notion of the substance of God. We know him by his properties and attributes."

It is observable that neither Moses, the first of the inspired penmen, nor any of the authors of the succeeding canonical books, enters into any *proof* of this first principle of religion, *that there is a* God. They all assume it as a truth commonly known and admitted. There is indeed in the sacred volume no allusion to the existence of Atheistical sentiments, till some ages after Moses, and then it is not quite clear whether speculative or practical Atheism be spoken of. From this circumstance we learn that, previous to the time of Moses, the idea of one supreme and infinitely perfect God was familiar to men; that it had descended to them from the earliest ages; and also that it was a truth of original revelation, and not one which the sages of preceding times had wrought out by rational investigation and deduction. Had that been the fact, we might have expected some intimation of it: and that if those views of God which are found in the Pentateuch, were discovered by the successive investigations of wise men among the ancients, the progress of this wonderful discovery would have been marked by Moses; or if one only had demonstrated this truth by his personal researches, that some grateful mention of so great a sage, of so celebrated a moral teacher, would have been made. A truth too so essential to the whole Mosaic system, and upon which his own official authority rested, had it originated from successful human investigation, would seem naturally to have required a statement of the arguments by which it had been demonstrated, as a fit introduction to a book in which he professed to record revelations received from this newly discovered being, and to enforce laws uttered under his command. Nothing of this kind is attempted; and the sacred historian and lawgiver proceeds at once to narrate the *acts*

of God and to declare his *will*. The history which he wrote, however, affords the reason why the introduction of formal proof of the existence of one true God was thought unnecessary. The first man, we are informed, knew God, not only from his works, but by sensible manifestation and converse; the same Divine appearances were made to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob; and when Moses wrote, persons were still living who had conversed with those who conversed with God or were descended from the same families to whom God "*at sundry times*" had appeared in visible glory, or in angelic forms. These Divine manifestations were also matters of public notoriety among the primitive families of mankind; from them the tradition was transmitted to their descendants; and the idea once communicated, was confirmed by every natural object which they saw around them. It continued even after the introduction of idolatry; and has never, except among the most ignorant of the heathen, been to this day obliterated by polytheistic superstitions. It was thus that the knowledge of God was communicated to the ancient world. No discovery of this truth, either in the time of Moses, or in any former age, was made by human research; neither the date nor the process of it could therefore be stated in his writings; and it would have been trifling to *moot* a question which had been so fully determined, and to attempt to *prove* a doctrine universally received.

That the idea of a supreme First Cause was at first obtained by the exercise of reason, is thus contradicted by the facts, that the first man received the knowledge of God by sensible converse with him, and that this doctrine was transmitted, with the confirmation of successive visible manifestations, to the early ancestors of all nations. Whether the discovery, therefore, of the simple truth of the existence of a First Cause be within the compass of human powers, is a point which cannot be determined by matter of fact; because it may be proved that those nations by whom that doctrine has been acknowledged, had their origin from a common stock, resident in that part of the world in which the primitive revelations were given. They were therefore never in circumstances in which such an experiment upon the power or weakness of the human mind could be made. Among some uncivilized tribes, such as the Hottentots of Africa, and the aborigines of New South Wales, the idea of a Supreme Being is probably entirely obliterated; some notions of spiritual existences, superior in power to man, and possessed of creative and destructive powers, do however remain, naturally tending to that train of reflection, which in better instructed minds issues in the apprehension of one Supreme and Divine Intelligence. But no instance has been known of the knowledge of God having thus, or by any other means, originating in themselves, been recovered; if restored to them at all, it has been by the instruction of others, and not by the rational investigation of even superior minds in their own tribes. Wherever there has been sufficient

mental cultivation to call forth the exercise of the rational faculty in search of spiritual and moral truth, the idea of a First Cause has been previously known; wherever that idea has been totally obliterated, the intellectual powers of man have not been in a state of exercise, and no curiosity as to such speculations has been awakened. Matter of fact does not therefore support the notion, that the existence of God is discoverable by the unassisted faculties of man; and there is, I conceive, very slender reason to admit the abstract probability.

A sufficient number of facts are obvious to the most cursory observation to show, that without some degree of education, man is wholly the creature of appetite. Labour, feasting, and sleep, divide his time, and wholly occupy his thoughts. If therefore we suppose a First Cause to be discoverable by human investigation, we must seek for the instances among a people whose civilization and intellectual culture have roused the mind from its torpor, and given it an interest in abstract and philosophic truth; for to a people so circumstanced as never to have heard of God, the question of the existence of a First Cause must be one of mere philosophy. Religious motives, whether of hope or fear, have no influence where no religion exists, and its very first principle is here supposed to be as yet undiscovered. Before, therefore, we can conceive the human mind to have reached a state of activity sufficiently energetic and curious even to commence such an inquiry, we must suppose a gradual progress from the uncivilized state, to a state of civil and scientific cultivation, and that without *religion* of any kind; without *moral control;* without principles of *justice*, except such as may have been slowly elaborated from those relations which concern the grosser interests of men, if even they be possible; without *conscience;* without *hope* or *fear* in another life. That no society of civilized men has ever been constituted under such circumstances, is what no one will deny; that it is possible to raise a body of men into that degree of civil improvement which would excite the passion for philosophic investigation without the aid of religion, which, in its lowest forms of superstition, admits in a defective degree what is implied in the existence of God, a superior, creative, governing, and destroying power, can have no proof, and is contradicted by every fact and analogy with which we are acquainted. Under the influence and control of religion, all states, ancient and modern, have hitherto been formed and maintained. It has entered essentially into all their legislative and gubernative institutions; and Atheism is so obviously *dissocializing*, that even the philosophic Atheists of Greece and Rome confined it to their *esoteric* doctrine, and were equally zealous with others to maintain the public religion as a restraint upon the multitude, without which they clearly enough discerned that human laws, and merely human motives, would be totally ineffectual to prevent that selfish gratification of the passions, the enmities, and the

cupidity of men, which would break up every community into its original fragments, and arm every man against his fellow.

From this we may conclude, that man without religion cannot exist in that state of civility and cultivation in which his intellectual powers are disposed to, or capable of, such a course of inquiry as might lead him to a knowledge of God; and that, as a mere barbarian, he would be wholly occupied with the gratification of his appetites, or his sloth. Should we however suppose it possible, that those who had no previous knowledge of God, or of superior invisible powers, might be brought to the habits of civil life, and be engaged in the pursuit of various knowledge, (which itself however is very incredible,) it would still remain a question whether, provided no idea from tradition or instruction had been suggested of the existence of spiritual superior beings, or of a supreme Creator or Ruler, such a truth would be within the reach of man, even in an imperfect form. We have already seen, that a truth may appear exceedingly simple, important, and evident, when once known, and on this account its demonstration may be considered easy, which nevertheless has been the result of much previous research on the part of the discoverer. (*Vide* part i, c. iv.) The abundant rational evidence of the existence of God, which may now be so easily collected, and which is so convincing, is therefore no proof, that without instruction from Heaven the human mind would ever have made the discovery. "God is the only way to himself; he cannot in the least be come at, defined or demonstrated by human reason; for where would the inquirer fix his beginning? He is to search for something he knows not what; a nature without known properties; a being without a name. It is impossible for such a person to declare or imagine what it is he would discourse of, or inquire into; a nature he has not the least apprehension of; a subject he has not the least glimpse of, in whole or in part, which he must separate from all doubt, inconsistencies, and errors; he must demonstrate without one known or sure principle to ground it upon; and draw certain necessary conclusions whereon to rest his judgment, without the least knowledge of one term or proposition to fix his procedure upon; and therefore can never know whether his conclusion be consequent, or not consequent, truth or falsehood, which is just the same in science as in architecture, to raise a building without a foundation. (*Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things.*)

"Suppose a person, whose powers of argumentation are improved to the utmost pitch of human capacity, but who has received no idea of God by any revelation, whether from tradition, Scripture, or inspiration: how is he to convince himself that God is, and from whence is he to learn *what* God is? That of which as yet he knows nothing, cannot be a subject of his thought, his reasonings, or his conversation. He can neither affirm nor deny till he know what is to be affirmed or denied'

From whence then is our philosopher to divine, in the *first* instance, his idea of the infinite Being, concerning the reality of whose existence he is, in the *second* place, to decide?" (*Hare's Preservative against Socinianism.*)

"Would a single individual, or even a single pair of the human race, or indeed several pairs of such beings as we are, if dropt from the hands of their Maker in the most genial soil and climate of this globe, without a single idea or notion engraved on their minds, ever think of instituting such an inquiry; or short and simple as the process of investigation is, would they be able to conduct it, should it somehow occur to them? No man who has paid due attention to the means by which all our ideas of external objects are introduced into our minds through the medium of the senses; or to the still more refined process by which *reflecting* on what passes in our minds themselves, when we combine or analyze these ideas, we acquire the rudiments of all our knowledge of intellectual objects, will pretend that they would. The efforts of intellect necessary to discover an unknown truth, are so much greater than those which may be sufficient to comprehend that truth, and feel the force of the evidence on which it rests, when fairly stated, that for one man, whose intellectual powers are equal to the former, ten thousand are only equal to the latter." (*Gleig's Stackhouse Intro.*)

"Between matter and spirit, things visible and invisible, time and eternity, beings finite and beings infinite, objects of sense and objects of faith, the connection is not perceptible to human observation. Though we push our researches therefore to the extreme point, whither the light of nature can carry us, they will in the end be abruptly terminated, and we must stop short at an immeasurable distance between the creature and the Creator." (*Van Mildert's Discourses.*)

These observations have great weight, and though we allow, that the argument which proves that the *effects* with which we are surrounded must have been *caused*, and thus leads us up through a chain of subordinate cause to one First Cause, has in it a simplicity, an obviousness, and a force, which, when we are previously furnished with the idea of God, makes it at first sight difficult to conceive, that men, under any degree of cultivation, should be inadequate to it; yet, if the human mind ever commenced such an inquiry at all, it is highly probable that it would rest in the notion of an *eternal succession* of causes and effects, rather than acquire the ideas of creation, in the proper sense, and of a supreme Creator. Scarcely any of the philosophers of the most inquisitive ages of Greece, or those of their followers at Rome, though with the advantage of traditions conveying the knowledge of God, seem to have been capable of conceiving of creation out of nothing, (*Vide* part i, c. iv,) and they consequently admitted the eternity of matter. This was equally the case with the Theistical, the Atheistical, and the

polytheistical philosophers. (8) It was not among them a subject of dispute; but taken for a point settled and not to be contradicted, that matter was eternal, and could not therefore be created. Against this notion, *since* the revelation of truth to man, philosophy has been able to adduce a very satisfactory argument; but, though it is not a very recondite one, it was never discovered by philosophy while unaided by the Scriptures. In like manner philosophy can *now* furnish cogent arguments against an infinite succession of causes and effects; but it does not appear probable that they could have been apprehended by those to whom the very notion of a First Cause had not been intimated. If however it were conceded, that some glimmering of this great truth might, by induction, have been discovered by contemplative minds thus circumstanced; by what means could they have *demonstrated* to themselves that that great collection of bodies which we call the world had but *one* Creator; that he is an incorporeal Spirit; that he is eternal, self existent, immortal, and independent? Certain it is, that the argument *á posteriori* does not of itself fully confirm all these conclusions; and the argument *á priori*, when directed to these mysterious points, is not, with all the advantages which we enjoy, so satisfactory, as to leave no rational ground of doubt as to its conclusiveness. No sober man, we apprehend, would be content with *that* as the only foundation of his faith and hope. If indeed the idea of God were *innate*, as some have contended, the question would be set at rest. But then every human being would be in possession of it. Of this there is not only no proof at all, but the evidence of fact is against it; and the doctrine of innate ideas may with confidence be pronounced a mere theory, assumed to support favourite notions, but contradicted by all experience. We are all conscious that we gain the knowledge of God by *instruction*; and we observe, that in proportion to the want of instruction, men are ignorant, as of other things, so of God. Peter, the wild boy, who in the beginning of the last century, was found in a wood in Germany, far from having any innate sense of God or religion, seemed to be incapable of instruction; and the aboriginal inhabitants of New Holland are found, to this day, in a state of knowledge but little superior, and certainly have no idea of the existence of one supreme Creator.

It is therefore to be concluded, that we owe the knowledge of the existence of God, and of his attributes, to revelation alone; but, being now discovered, the rational evidence of both is copious and irresisti-

(8) "Few, if any, of the ancient pagan philosophers acknowledged God to be, in the most proper sense, the Creator of the world. By calling him Δημιουργος, 'the Maker of the world,' they did not mean, that he brought it out of non-existence into being; but only that he built it out of pre-existent materials, and disposed it into a regular form and order." See ample proofs and illustrations in c. 13, part i, of LELAND'S *Necessity of Revelation*.

ble; (9) so much so, that Atheism has never been able to make much progress among mankind where this revelation has been preserved. It is resisted by demonstrations too numerous, obvious, and convincing; and is itself too easily proved to involve the most revolting absurdities.

No subject has employed the thoughts and pens of the most profound thinkers more than the demonstration of the being and attributes of God; and the evidence from fact, reason, and the nature of things, which has been collected, is large and instructive. These researches have not however brought to light any *new* attribute of God not found in Scripture. This is a strong presumption that the *only* source of our notions on this subject is the manifestation which God has been pleased to make of himself, and a confirmation that human reason, if left to itself, had never made the slightest discovery respecting the Divine nature.—But as to what is revealed, they are of great importance in the controversy with polytheism, and with that still more unnatural and monstrous perversion, the philosophy which denies a God.

Demonstrations both *á priori* and *á posteriori*, the former beginning with the cause, the latter with the effect, have been attempted, not only of the being, but also of all the attributes ascribed to God in the Holy Scriptures. On each we shall offer some observations and illustrations, taking the argument *á posteriori* first, both because, as to the simple question of the being of a God, it is the only satisfactory and convincing proof; and especially, because it is that only to which the Scriptures themselves refer us. "*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work.*" "*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.*" "*For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen.*"

Nature, as one justly observes, proceeds from causes to effects; but the most certain and successful investigations of man, proceed from effects to causes, and this is the character of what logicians have called the argument *á posteriori*.

In philosophy it has been laid down as an *axiom*, "that no event or change comes to pass merely of itself, but that every change stands related to and implies the existence and influence of something else, in consequence of which such change comes to pass, and which may be regarded as the principle, beginning, or source of the change referred

(9) "Tell men there is a God, and their mind embraces it as a necessary truth; unfold his attributes, and they will see the explanation of them in his works. When the foundation is laid sure and firm that there is a God, and his will the cause of all things, and nothing made but by his special appointment and command, then the order of beings will fill their minds with a due sense of the Divine Majesty, and they may be made a scale to raise juster conceptions of what is immortal and invisible." (ELLIS's *Knowledge of Divine Things.*)

to it. Accordingly the term *cause* is usually employed to denote the supposed principle of change; and the term *effect* is applied to the change considered in relation to the principle of change whence it proceeded. This axiom or principle is usually thus expressed:—"For every effect there must be a cause." "Nothing exists or comes to pass without a cause." "Nihil turpius philosopho quam fieri sine causa quicquam dicere."

Rooted as this principle is in the common sense, and the common observation and experience of mankind, it is assailed in the metaphysical Atheism of Hume, who appears to have borrowed his argument from the no less skeptical Hobbes, and the relation of cause and effect has in consequence been the subject of considerable controversy.

Causes have been distributed by logicians into *efficient*, *material*, *final*, and *formal*. *Efficient* causes are the agents that produce certain effects; *material* causes are the subjects on which *the agent* performs his operation; or those contingent natures which lie within the reach of the agent to influence. *Final* causes are the motives or purposes, which move to action, or the end for which any thing is done. *Formal* causes denote the changes resulting from the operation of the agent; or that which determines a thing to be what it is, and distinguishes it from every thing else.

It is with *efficient* causes as understood in the above distribution, that we are principally concerned. Mr. Hume and his followers have laid it down, that there is no instance in which we are able to perceive a necessary connection between two successive events; or to comprehend in what manner the one proceeds from the other, as its cause.—From experience, they observe, indeed we learn, that there are many events, which are constantly conjoined, so that the one invariably follows the other; but it is possible, for any thing we know to the contrary, that this connection, though a constant one, as far as our observation has reached, may not be a necessary connection; nay, it is possible, that there may be no necessary connections among any of the phenomena we see, and if there be any such connections existing, we may rest assured that we shall never be able to discover them. This doctrine has however been admitted by many who not only deny the skeptical conclusions which Hobbes and Hume deduced from it, but who contend that it leads to a directly contrary conclusion. "The fallacy of this part of Mr. Hume's system," says Professor Stewart, "does not consist in his premises, but in the conclusion which he draws from them. The word *cause* is used, both by philosophers and the vulgar, in two senses, which are widely different. When it is said, that every change in nature indicates the operation of a cause; the word cause expresses something which is supposed to be necessarily connected with the change, and without which it could not have hap-

cerned. This may be called the *metaphysical* meaning of the word; and such causes may be called *metaphysical* or *efficient causes*. In natural philosophy, however, when we speak of one thing being the cause of another, all that we mean is, that the two are constantly conjoined; so that when we see the one, we may expect the other.—These conjunctions we learn from experience alone; and without an acquaintance with them, we could not accommodate our conduct to the established course of nature. The causes which are the objects of our investigation in natural philosophy, may, for the sake of distinction, be called *physical* causes." (*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.*) By this distinction and concession all that is skeptical and Atheistic, in Hume's doctrine, is indeed completely refuted; for if metaphysical or efficient causes be allowed, and also that "*power*, *force*, *energy*, and *causation*, are to be regarded as attributes of mind, and can exist in mind only," (*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind,*) it is of little consequence to the argument as to the existence of a supreme First Cause, whether the constant succession of events among *physical* causes, has a necessary connection or not; or in other words, whether what is purely material can have the attribute of causation.—The writer we have just quoted, thinks that this doctrine is "more favourable to Theism, than even the common notions upon this subject;"—"if at the same time we admit the authority of that principle of the mind, which leads us to refer every change to an efficient cause," —"as it keeps the Deity always in view, not only as the first, but as the constantly operating, efficient cause in nature, and as the great connecting principle among all the various phenomena which we observe." (*Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.*) This author still farther thinks, that Mr. Hume has undesignedly furnished an antidote by this error to Spinozism itself. "Mr. Hume's doctrine, in the unqualified form in which he states it, may lead to other consequences not less dangerous; but if he had not the good fortune to conduct metaphysicians to the truth, he may at least be allowed the merit of having shut up for ever one of the most frequented and fatal paths which led them astray,"—"the cardinal principle on which the whole system of Spinoza turns, being that all events, physical and moral, are necessarily linked together as causes and effects." (*Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement of the Encyclo. Britt.*)

When the doctrine is thus restricted to *physical* causes, its dangerous tendency is greatly weakened, if not altogether neutralized; yet, notwithstanding the authority with which it has been supported, it may be suspected that it is radically unsound, and that it leads to consequences very contradictory to the experience of mankind, or, at best, that it is rather a philosophical paradox or quibble, than a philosophic discovery. What are called above metaphysical or efficient causes are admitted, with

respect to mind, of which "*power, force, energy* and *causation*, are attributes." "One kind of cause, namely, what a man, or any other living being, is to his own voluntary actions, or to those changes which he produces directly in himself, and indirectly in himself, by the occasional exertion of his own power," says Dr. Gregory, (*Literary and Philosophical Essays*,) "may be called for distinction's sake an agent. That there are such agents, and that many events are to be referred to them, as either wholly or partly their causes or principles of change, is not only certain but even self evident." We are all conscious of power to produce certain effects, and we are sure that there is between this cause and the effect produced, more than a mere relation of antecedence and sequence, for we are conscious not only of *designing* to produce the effect, but of the *exertion* of *power*, though we do not always know the medium by which the power acts upon the object, as when we move the hand or the foot voluntarily, nor the mode in which the exerted energy connects itself with the result. Yet the result follows the will, and however often this is repeated, it is still the same. The relations between physical causes and effects must be different from this; but if according to the doctrine of Hume it were only a relation of *succession*, the following absurdities, as stated by Dr. Reid, (*Reid's Essays*,) would inevitably follow—"night would be the cause of day, and day the cause of night; for no two things have more constantly followed each other since the beginning of the world. *Any thing*, for what we know, may be the cause of *any thing*, since nothing is essential to a cause but its being constantly followed by the effect: what is unintelligent may be the cause of what is intelligent; folly may be the cause of wisdom, and evil of good; and thus all reasoning from the effect to the nature of the cause, and all reasoning from final causes, must be given up as fallacious." Physical causes, as for example, what impulse is to motion, heat to expansion, fusion, and evaporation; the earth to the fall of a stone toward it; the sun and moon to the tides; express a relation different from that between man and any of his voluntary actions; but it cannot be the same as the relation of priority and succession among things or events. Men have been mistaken, in some cases, in taking the circumstances of the succession of one event to another as a proof of their relation as cause and effect; but even that shows that, in the fixed opinion of mankind, *constant* succession, when there is an appearance of the dependence of one thing upon another, implies more than mere succession, and that what is considered as the *cause* has an *efficiency* either from itself or by *derivation*, by which the effect is brought to pass. It is truly observed by Dr. Brown, (*Procedure, &c, of the Human Understanding*,) "We find by observation and experience that such and such effects *are* produced; but when we attempt to think of the reason *why*, and the manner *how* the causes work those effects, then we are at a

stand, and all our reasoning is precarious, or at best but probable conjecture." From hence however it would be a ridiculous conclusion, that because we are ignorant of the manner in which physical causes act, they do not act at all; or that none such exist in the ordinarily received sense; that is, that the effect is not *dependent* upon what is called the *cause*, and that the presence of the latter, according to the established laws of nature, is not *necessary* to the effect, so that without it the effect would not follow. The *efficient* cause may be *latent*, but the *physical* cause is that *through* which it operates, and must be supposed to have an *adaptation* to convey the power, so to speak, in some precise mode, by mechanical or other means, to the result, or there could neither be ingenuity and contrivance in the works of art, nor wisdom in the creation. A watch might indicate the hour without wheels, and a clod might give as copious a light to the planetary system as the sun. If the doctrine of Hume denies *efficient* causes, it contradicts all consciousness and the experience founded upon it; if it applies only to *physical* causes, it either confounds them with efficient causes, or says in paradoxical language, only what has been better said by others, and that without any danger of involving either absurd or dangerous consequences. "When an event is produced according to a known law of nature, the law of nature is called the cause of that event. But a law of nature is not the efficient cause of any event; it is only the rule according to which the efficient cause acts. A law is a thing conceived in the mind of a rational being, not a thing which has a real existence, and therefore like a motive, it can neither act nor be acted upon, and consequently cannot be an efficient cause. If there be no being that acts according to that law, it produces no effect." (*Reid's Essays.*) "All things that are done in the world, are done immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings; matter being evidently not at all capable of any laws or powers whatever, any more than it is capable of intelligence; excepting only this one negative power, that every part of it will, of itself, always and necessarily continue in that state, whether of rest or motion, wherein it at present is. So that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the natural powers of matter and laws of motion, of gravitation, attraction, or the like, are indeed, (if we will speak strictly and properly,) the effects of God's acting upon matter continually, and every moment, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent beings. Consequently there is no such thing as what men commonly call the course of nature, or the powers of nature. The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the will of God producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner." (*Dr. Samuel Clarke.*)

The true state of the case appears to be, 1 That there are efficient

causes, and that the relation between them and their effects is *necessary*, since, without the operation of the efficient, the effect would not take place. This we find in ourselves, and we proceed therefore upon the surest ground when we ascribe effects which are above human power, to a causation which is more than human, and, in the case of the phenomena of universal nature, to a *Divine cause*, or in other words to God.

2. That there are physical causes, between which and their effects there is a relation or connection very different to that of a mere order of succession, which in fact is a relation which entirely excludes the idea of causation in any sense. According to the present established order of nature, this also may be termed a *necessary* connection, although not necessary in the sense of its being the only method by which the infinite and first efficient could produce the effect. His resources are doubtless boundless; but having established a certain order in nature, or, in other words, having given certain powers and properties to matter, with reference to a mutual operation of different bodies upon each other, his supreme efficiency, his causing power, takes its direction, and displays itself in this order, and is *modified* by the pre-established and constantly upheld properties *through* and *by* which it operates. So far, and in this sense, the relation between physical causes and effects is a *necessary* one, and the doctrine of final causes is thus established by those wondrous arrangements and adaptations in the different parts of nature, and in individual bodies, which carry on, and conduct the ever-acting efficiency of God to those wise and benevolent ends which he has proposed. Thus the sun, by virtue of a previously established adaptation between its own qualities, the earth's atmosphere and the human eye, is the necessary *cause* of light and vision, though the true efficient be the Creator himself, ever present to his own arrangements; as the spring of a watch is the necessary cause of the motion of the wheels and indices, though the efficient, in the proper sense, is the artist himself who framed the whole. In these cases there is, however, this difference to be observed, though it affects not the argument of a secondary physical causation, that the maker of a watch, finding certain bodies, endued with certain primary properties, may array them one against the other, and so leave his work to go on without his constant impulse and interposition; but in nature, the primary properties of matter, and its existence itself are *derived* and *dependent*, and need the constant upholding of Him who spake them out of nothing, and "by whom they all *consist*."

The relation of cause and effect according to the common sense and observation of mankind, being thus established, (1) we proceed to the arguments which are founded upon it.

(1) The language of every nation is formed on the connection between cause and effect. For in every language there are not only many words directly expressing ideas of this subject, such as cause, efficiency, effect, production, produce

The existence of God, once communicated to us by his own revelation, direct or traditional, is capable of ample proof, and receives an irresistible corroborative evidence, *à posteriori*.

An argument *à priori*, is an argument from something *antecedent* to something *consequent*; from *principle* to *corollary*; from *cause* to *effect*. An argument *à posteriori*, on the contrary, is an argument from *consequent* to *antecedent*, from *effect* to *cause*. Both these kinds of proof have been resorted to in support of the doctrine of the existence of God; but it is on the latter only that any dependence can be placed, and the demonstration is too strong to need a doubtful auxiliary.

The first argument, *à posteriori*, for the existence of a God, is drawn from our own actual existence, and that of other beings around us. This, by an obvious error, has sometimes been called an argument *à priori*; but if our existence is made use of to prove the existence of a supreme Creator, it is unquestionably an argument which proceeds from consequent to antecedent, from effect to cause. This ancient, and obvious demonstration has been placed in different views by different writers. Locke has, in substance, thus stated it. Every man knows with absolute certainty, that he himself exists. He knows also that he did not always exist, but began to be. It is clearly certain to him, that his existence was caused and not fortuitous, and was produced by a cause adequate to the production. By an adequate cause, is invariably intended, a cause possessing and exerting an efficacy sufficient to bring any effect to pass. In the present case, an adequate cause is one possessing, and exerting all the understanding necessary to contrive, and the power necessary to create, such a being as the man in question. This cause is what we are accustomed to call God. The understanding necessary to contrive, and the power necessary to create a being compounded of the human soul and body, admit of no limits. He who can contrive and create such a being, can contrive and create any thing. He who actually contrived and created man, certainly contrived and created all things.

The same argument is given more copiously, but with great clearness, by Mr. Howe:—

"We therefore begin with God's existence; for the evincing of which,

effectuate, create, generate, &c, or words equivalent to these; but every verb in every language, except the intransitive impersonal verbs, and the verb substantive, involves, of course, causation or efficiency, and refers always to an agent, or cause, in such a manner, that without the operation of this cause or agent, the verb would have no meaning.—All mankind, except a few Atheistical and skeptical philosophers, have thus agreed in acknowledging this connection, and they have acknowledged it as fully as others in their customary language. They have spoken exactly as other men speak, and the connection between cause and effect is as often declared in their conversation and writings, and as much *relied* on, as in those of other men. (DWIGHT'S THEOLOGY, vol. i, p. 5.)

we may be most assured, *First*, that there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity; or that, looking backward, somewhat of real being must be confessed eternal. Let such as have not been used to think of any thing more than what they could see with their eyes, and to whom reasoning only seems difficult because they have not tried what they can do in it, but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easy steps, they will soon find themselves as sure of this as that they see, or hear, or understand, or are any thing.

"For being sure that something now is, (that you see, for instance, or are something,) you must then acknowledge, that certainly something always was, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that, some time, nothing was; or that all being once was not. And so, since you find that something *now* is, there was a time when all being did *begin* to be; that is, that till that time there was nothing; but now, at that time something first began to be. For what can be plainer than that if all being *some time* was not, and *now* some being is, every thing of being had a beginning. And thence it would follow, that some being, that is, the first that ever began to be, did of itself start up out of nothing, or made itself to be when before nothing was.

"But now, do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossible any thing should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, and when nothing at all as yet was, that it should make itself, or come into being of itself? For surely making itself is doing something. But can that which is nothing do any thing? Unto all doing there must be some doer. Wherefore a thing must be before it can do any thing; and therefore it would follow, that it was before it was; or *was* and *was not*, was *something* and *nothing*, at the same time. Yea, and that it was diverse from itself; for a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore it is most apparent, that some being hath *ever* been, or did *never begin* to be.

"Whence, farther, it is also evident, *Secondly*, that some being was uncaused, or was ever of itself without any cause. For what never was from another had never any cause, since nothing could be its own cause. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus; that either some being was uncaused, or all being was caused. But if all being was caused, then some one at least was the cause of itself; which hath been already shown impossible. Therefore the expression commonly used concerning the first being, that it was of itself, is only to be taken *negatively*, that is, that it was not of another; not *positively*, as if it did some time make itself. Or what there is positive signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus, that it was a being of that nature, as that it was impossible it should ever not have been; not that it did ever of itself step out of not being into being

"And now it is hence farther evident, *Thirdly*, that some being is independent upon any other, that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other, as a productive cause, and was not beholden to any other, that it might come into being; it is thereupon equally evident that it is simply independent, or cannot be beholden to any for its continued being. For what did never need a productive cause, doth as little need a sustaining or conserving cause. And to make this more plain, either some being is independent, or all being is dependent. But there is nothing without the compass of all being whereon it may depend. Wherefore to say, that all being doth depend, is to say, it depends on nothing, that is, that it depends not. For to depend on nothing, is not to depend. It is therefore a manifest contradiction to say that all being doth depend; against which it is no relief to urge, that all beings do circularly depend on one another. (2) For so, however the whole circle or sphere of being should depend on nothing; or one at last depend on itself, which negatively taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for—that one, the common support of all the rest, depends not on any thing without itself.

"Whence also it is plainly consequent, *Fourthly*, that such a Being is necessary, or doth necessarily exist: that is, that it is of such a nature as that it could not or cannot but be. For what is in being, neither by its own choice, nor any other's, is necessarily. But what was not made by itself, (which hath been shown to be impossible,) nor by any other, (as it hath been proved something was not,) it is manifest, it neither depended on its choice, nor any other's that it is. And therefore, its existence is not owing to choice at all, but to the necessity of its own nature. Wherefore it is always by a simple, absolute, natural necessity; being of a nature to which it is altogether repugnant and impossible ever not to have been, or ever to cease from being. And now having gone thus far, and being assured, that hitherto we feel the ground firm under us; that is, having gained a full certainty, that there

(2) The notion of an infinite series of caused and successive beings is absurd; for of this infinite series, either some one part has not been successive to any other, or else all the several parts of it have been successive. If some one part of it was not successive, then it had a *first* part, which destroys the supposition of its infinity. If *all* the several parts of it have been successive, then have they all once been future: but if they have all been future, a time may be conceived when none of them had existence: and if so, then it follows, either that all the *parts* and consequently the *whole* of this infinite series must have arisen from nothing, which is absurd; or else, that there must be something in the *whole*, beside what is contained in *all the parts*, which is also absurd. See Clarke's Demonstration, and Woolaston's Religion of Nature. "A chain," says Dr. Paley, "composed of an infinite number of links can no more support itself, than a chain composed of a finite number of links. If we increase the number of links from ten to a hundred, and from a hundred to a thousand, &c, we make not the smallest approach, we observe not the smallest tendency toward self support."

is an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, and therefore actually and everlastingly existing; we may advance one step farther,

"And with equal assurance and, *Fifthly*, that this eternal, independent, uncaused, necessary Being, is self active; that is, (which is at present meant,) not such as acts upon itself, but that which hath the power of acting upon other things, in and of itself, without deriving it from any other. Or at least that there is such a Being as is eternal, uncaused, &c, having the power of action in and of itself. For either such a Being as hath been already evinced is of itself active or unactive, or hath the power of action of itself or not. If we will say the latter, let it be considered what we say, and to what purpose we say it.

"1. We are to weigh what it is we affirm, when we speak of an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, which is of itself totally unactive, or destitute of any active power. If we will say there is some such thing, we will confess, when we have called it something, it is a very silly, despicable, idle something, and a something, (if we look upon it alone,) as good as nothing. For there is but little odds between being nothing, and being able to do nothing. We will again confess, eternity, self origination, independency, necessity of existence, to be very great and highly dignifying attributes; and import a most inconceivable excellency. For what higher glory can we ascribe to any being, than to acknowledge it to have been from eternity of itself, (3) without being beholden to any other, and to be such as that it can be and cannot but be in the same state, self-subsisting, and self sufficient to all eternity? But can our reason either direct or endure, that we should so incongruously misplace so magnificent attributes as these, and ascribe the prime glory of the most excellent Being unto that which is next to nothing? But if any in the meantime will be so inconsiderate as to say this, let it

"2. Be considered to what purpose they say it. Is it to exclude a necessary self-active Being? But it can signify nothing to that purpose. For such a Being they will be forced to acknowledge, let them do what they can (beside putting out their own eyes) notwithstanding. For why do they acknowledge any necessary being at all, that was ever of itself? Is it not because they cannot, otherwise, for their hearts, tell how it was ever possible that any thing at all could come into being?

(3) "We will acknowledge an impropriety in this word, and its conjugate, *self originate*, sometimes hereafter used: which yet is recompensed by their conveniency; as they may perhaps find who shall make trial how to express the sense intended by them in other words. And they are used without suspicion, that it can be thought they are meant to signify as if God ever gave original to himself; but in the negative sense, that he never received it from any other; yea, and that he is, what is more than equivalent to his being self caused; namely, a Being of himself so excellent as not to need or be capable to admit any cause."

But, finding that something is, they are compelled to acknowledge that something hath ever been, necessarily and of itself. No other account could be given how other things came to be. But what? doth it signify any thing toward the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting, *unactive* Being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choke them if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, an unactive cause, which is efficient or the author of any thing? And do they not see they are as far from their mark, or do no more toward the assigning an original to all other things, by supposing an eternal, unactive being only, than if they supposed none at all? That which can *do nothing*, can no more be the productive cause of another, than that which *is nothing*. Wherefore, by the same reason that hath constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge this Being to be self active, or such as hath the power of action in and of itself; or that there is certainly such a Being, who is the cause of all the things which our senses tell us are existent in the world.

"For what else is left us to say or think? Will we think fit to say that all things we behold were, as they now are, necessarily existent from all eternity? That were to speak against our own eyes, which continually behold the rise and fall of living things, of whatsoever sort or kind, that can come under their notice. For all the things we behold are, in some respect or other, internally or externally, continually changing, and therefore could never long be beheld as they are. And to say then, they have been continually changing from eternity, and yet have been necessarily, is unintelligible and flat nonsense. For what is necessarily, is always the same; and what is in this or that posture necessarily, (that is, by an intrinsic, simple and absolute necessity, which must be here meant,) must be ever so. Wherefore to suppose the world in this or that state necessarily, and yet that such a state is changeable, is an impossible and self-contradicting supposition.

"But now, since we find that the present state of things is changeable, and actually changing, and that what is changeable is not necessarily, and of itself; and since it is evident that there is some necessary Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been; and that without action nothing could be from it; since also all change imports somewhat of passion, and all passion supposes action; and all action, active power; and active power, an original seat or subject, which is self active, or hath the power of action in and of itself; (for there could be no derivation of it from that which hath it not, and no first derivation, but from that which hath it originally of itself; and a first derivation there must be, since all things that are, or ever have been, furnished with it, and not of themselves, must either immediately or mediately have derived it

from that which had it of itself;) it is therefore manifest that there is a necessary, self-active Being, the Cause and Author of this perpetually variable state and frame of things.

"And hence, since we can frame no notion of life which self-active power doth not, at least, comprehend, (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot,) it is consequent, *Sixthly*, that this Being is also originally vital, and the root of all vitality, such as hath life in or of itself, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing." (*Living Temple.*)

The self-existent, eternal, self-active, and vital Being, whose necessary existence has thus been proved, is also *intelligent;* of which the demonstration *à posteriori* is large and convincing. For since we are speaking of a Being who is himself independent, and upon whom all things depend; and from the dependence of every thing we see around us, we necessarily infer a *cause* of them, whom we do not see, but who must himself be independent, and from whom they must have originated; their actual existence, and their being upheld and sustained, prove his *power*, and their arrangement, and *wise* and evidently *intentional* disposition, prove also his *intelligence.*

In the proposition that the self-existent and original cause of all things must be an intelligent Being, Dr. Samuel Clarke justly observes, lies the main question between us and Atheists. "For that something must be self existent, and that that which is self existent must be eternal and infinite, and the original cause of all things, will not bear much dispute. But all Atheists, whether they hold the world to be of itself eternal, both as to matter and form, or whether they hold the matter to be eternal, and the form contingent, or whatever hypothesis they frame, have always asserted and must maintain, either directly or indirectly, that the self-existent Being is not an intelligent Being; but either pure inactive matter, or (which in other words is the very same thing,) a mere *necessary agent.* For a mere necessary agent must of necessity either be plainly and directly in the grossest sense unintelligent, which was the notion of the ancient Atheists of the self-existent Being; or else its intelligence, according to *Spinoza* and some moderns, must be wholly separate from any power of will and choice, which in respect of excellency and perfection, or indeed to any common sense, is the very same thing as no intelligence at all. Now that the self-existent Being is not such a blind and *unintelligent* necessity, but in the most proper sense an understanding and really active Being, does not indeed so obviously and directly appear to us by considerations *à priori;* but *à posteriori* almost every thing in the world demonstrates to us this great truth, and affords undeniable arguments to prove that the world and all things therein are the effects of an *intelligent* and *knowing* Cause.

"And 1st. Since in general there are manifestly in things various

kinds of powers, and very different excellencies and degrees of perfection; it must needs be, that, in the order of causes and effects, the cause must always be more excellent than the effect: and consequently the self-existent Being, whatever that be supposed to be, must of necessity (being the original of all things) contain in itself the sum and highest degree of all the perfections of all things. Not because that which is self existent, must therefore have all possible perfections: (for this, though most certainly true in itself, yet cannot be so easily demonstrated *à priori:*) but because it is impossible that any effect should have any perfection, which was not in the cause. For if it had, then that perfection would be caused by nothing; which is a plain contradiction. Now an unintelligent being, it is evident, cannot be endued with all the perfections of all things in the world; because intelligence is one of those perfections. All things therefore cannot arise from an unintelligent original: and consequently the self-existent Being must of necessity be intelligent.

"There is no possibility for an Atheist to avoid the force of this argument any other way, than by asserting one of these two things: either that there is no intelligent Being at all in the universe; or that intelligence is no distinct perfection, but merely a composition of figure and motion, as colour and sounds are vulgarly supposed to be. Of the former of these assertions, every man's own consciousness is an abundant confutation. For they who contend that beasts are mere machines, have yet never presumed to conjecture that men are so too. And that the latter assertion (in which the main strength of Atheism lies) is most absurd and impossible, shall be shown.

"For since in men in particular there is undeniably that power, which we call thought, intelligence, consciousness, perception or knowledge; there must of necessity either have been from eternity without any original cause at all, an infinite succession of men, whereof no one has had a necessary, but every one a dependent and communicated being; or else these beings, endued with perception and consciousness, must at some time or other have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as sense, perception, or consciousness; or else they must have been produced by some intelligent superior Being. There never was nor can be any Atheist whatsoever, that can deny but one of these three suppositions must be the truth. If, therefore, the two former can be proved to be false and impossible, the latter must be owned to be demonstrably true. Now that the first is impossible, is evident from what has been already said. And that the second is likewise impossible, may be thus demonstrated:—

"If perception or intelligence be any real distinct quality, or perfection, and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; then beings endued with perception or consciousness, can never

possibly have arisen purely out of that which itself had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree. This is very evident; because, if any thing could give to another any perfection which it has not itself, that perfection would be caused absolutely by nothing; which is a plain contradiction. If any one here replies, (as Mr. Gildon has done in a letter to Mr. Blount,) that colours, sounds, tastes, and the like, arise from figure and motion, which have no such qualities in themselves; or that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are confessed to be given from God, who yet cannot, without extreme blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that therefore in like manner, perception or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself: the answer is very easy: First, that colours, sounds, tastes, and the like, are by no means effects arising from mere figure and motion; there being nothing in the bodies themselves, the objects of the senses, that has any manner of similitude to any of these qualities; but they are plainly thoughts or modifications of the mind itself, which is an intelligent being; and are not properly caused, but only occasioned, by the impressions of figure and motion. Nor will it at all help an Atheist (as to the present question) though we should here make for him, (that we may allow him the greatest possible advantage,) even that most absurd supposition, that the mind itself is nothing but mere matter, and not at all an immaterial substance. For, even supposing it to be mere matter, yet he must needs confess it to be such matter, as is endued not only with figure and motion, but also with the quality of intelligence and perception: and consequently, as to the present question, it will still come to the same thing; that colours, sounds, and the like, which are not qualities of unintelligent bodies, but perceptions of mind, can no more be caused by, or arise from mere unintelligent figure, and motion, than colour can be a triangle, or sound a square, or something be caused by nothing. Secondly; as to the other part of the objection, that figure; divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are (as we ourselves acknowledge) given it from God, who yet cannot, without extreme blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that, therefore, in like manner, perception or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself; the answer is still easier: that figure divisibility, mobility, and other such like qualities of matter, are not real proper, distinct, and positive powers, but only negative qualities, deficiencies, or imperfections. And though no cause can communicate to its effect any real perfection which it has not itself, yet the effect may easily have many imperfections, deficiencies, or negative qualities, which are not in the cause. Though therefore figure, divisibility, mobility, and the like, (which are mere negations, as all limitations, and all defects of

powers are,) may be in the effect, and not in the cause; yet intelligence, (which I now suppose, and shall prove immediately, to be a distinct quality; and which no man can say is a mere negation,) cannot possibly be so.

"Having therefore thus demonstrated, that if perception or intelligence be supposed to be a distinct quality or perfection, (though even but of matter only, if the Atheist pleases,) and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; then beings endued with perception or consciousness can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection, which it has not itself: it will easily appear, secondly, that perception or intelligence is really such a distinct quality or perfection, and not possibly a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion: and that for this plain reason, because intelligence is not figure, and consciousness is not motion. For whatever can arise from, or be compounded of any things, is still only those very things of which it was compounded. And if infinite compositions or divisions be made eternally, the things will be but eternally the same. And all their possible effects can never be any thing but repetitions of the same. For instance: all possible changes, compositions, or divisions of figure, are still nothing but figure: and all possible compositions or effects of motion, can eternally be nothing but mere motion. If therefore there ever was a time when there was nothing in the universe but matter and motion, there never could have been any thing else therein but matter and motion. And it would have been as impossible, there should ever have existed any such thing as intelligence or consciousness; or even any such thing as light, or heat, or sound, or colour, or any of those we call secondary qualities of matter; as it is now impossible for motion to be blue or red, or for a triangle to be transformed into a sound. That which has been apt to deceive men in this matter, is this, that they imagine compounds to be somewhat really different from that of which they are compounded: which is a very great mistake. For all the things, of which men so judge, either, if they be really different, are not compounds nor effects of what men judge them to be, but are something totally distinct; as when the vulgar think colours and sounds to be properties inherent in bodies, when indeed they are purely thoughts of the mind: or else, if they be really compounds and effects, then they are not different, but exactly the same that ever they were; as, when two triangles put together make a square, that square is still nothing but two triangles; or when a square cut in halves makes two triangles, those two triangles are still only the two halves of a square; or when the mixture of blue and yellow powder makes a green, that green is still nothing but blue and yellow intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of microscopes. And in short, every thing

by composition, division or motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or in parts, or in different place or order. He therefore that will affirm intelligence to be the effect of a system of unintelligent matter in motion, must either affirm intelligence to be a mere name or external denomination of certain figures and motions, and that it differs from unintelligent figures and motions, no otherwise than as a circle or triangle differs from a square, which is evidently absurd: or else he must suppose it to be a real distinct quality, arising from certain motions of a system of matter not in itself intelligent; and then this no less evidently absurd consequence would follow, that one quality inhered in another; for, in that case, not the substance itself, the particles of which the system consists, but the mere mode, the particular mode of motion and figure would be intelligent.

"That the self existent and original cause of all things, is an intelligent Being, appears abundantly from the excellent variety, order, beauty, and wonderful contrivance, and fitness of all things in the world, to their proper and respective ends. Since therefore things are thus, it must unavoidably be granted, (even by the most obstinate Atheist,) either that all plants and animals are originally the work of an intelligent Being, and created by him in time; or that having been from eternity in the same order and method they now are in, they are an eternal effect of an eternal intelligent Cause continually exerting his infinite power and wisdom; or else that without any self-existent original at all, they have been derived one from another in an eternal succession, by an infinite progress of dependent causes. The first of these three ways is, the conclusion we assert: the second, (so far as the cause of Atheism is concerned,) comes to the very same thing: and the third I have already shown to be absolutely impossible and a contradiction.

"Supposing it was possible that the form of the world, and all the visible things contained therein, with the order, beauty, and exquisite fitness of their parts; nay, supposing that even intelligence itself, with consciousness and thought, in all the beings we know, could possibly be the result or effect of mere unintelligent matter, figure, and motion; (which is the most unreasonable and impossible supposition in the world;) yet even still there would remain an undeniable demonstration, that the self-existent Being, (whatever it be supposed to be,) must be intelligent For even these principles themselves, unintelligent figure and motion could never have possibly existed, without there had been before them an intelligent cause. I instance in motion. It is evident there is now such a thing as motion in the world; which either began at some time or other, or was eternal. If it began at any time, then the question is granted, that the First Cause is an intelligent being: for mere unintelligent matter, and that at rest, it is manifest, could never of itself begin to move On the contrary, if motion was eterna, it was either eternally

caused by some eternal intelligent Being, or it must of itself be necessary and self existent; or else, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, it must have existed from eternity by an endless successive communication. If motion was eternally caused by some eternal intelligent Being; this also is granting the question as to the present dispute. If it was of itself necessary and self existent; then it follows that it must be a contradiction in terms, to suppose any matter to be at rest: beside, (as there is no end of absurdities,) it must also imply a contradiction, to suppose that there might possibly have been originally more or less motion in the universe than there actually was: which is so very absurd a consequence, that Spinoza himself, though he expressly asserts all things to be necessary, yet seems ashamed here to speak out his opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself in the question about the original of motion. But if it be said, lastly, that motion, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, has existed from eternity, merely by an endless successive communication, as Spinoza, inconsistenlty enough, seems to assert; this I have before shown to be a plain contradiction. It remains therefore that motion must of necessity be originally caused by something that is intelligent; or else there never could have been any such thing as motion in the world. And consequently the self-existent Being, the original Cause of all things, (whatever it is supposed to be,) must of necessity be an intelligent Being."

The argument from the existence of motion to the existence of an *intelligent* First Cause is so convincing, that the farther illustration of it, in which the absurdities of Atheism are exhibited in another view, will not be unacceptable.

"Consider that all this motion and motive power must have some source and fountain diverse from the dull and sluggish matter moved thereby, unto which it already hath appeared impossible that it should originally and essentially belong.

"Also that the *mighty active Being*, which hath been proved necessarily existent, and whereto it must *first* belong, if we suppose it destitute of the self-moderating principle of wisdom and counsel, cannot but be always exerting its motive power, invariably used to the same degree, that is, to its very utmost, and can never cease or fail to do so. For its act knows no limit but that of its power, (if this can have any,) and its power is essential to it, and its essence is necessary.

"Farther, that the motion impressed upon the matter of the universe, must hereupon necessarily have received a continual increase ever since it came into being.

"That supposing this motive power to have been exerted from eternity, it must have been increased long ago to an infinite excess.

"That hence the coalition of the particles of matter for the forming

of any thing, had been altogether impossible: for let us suppose this exerted motive power to have been, any instant, but barely sufficient for such a formation; because that could not be despatched in an instant, it would, by its continual increase, be grown so over-sufficient, as, in the next instant, to dissipate the particles, but now beginning to unite.

"At least, it would be most apparent, that if ever such a frame of things as we now behold could have been produced, that motive power, increased to so infinite an excess, must have shattered the whole frame in pieces, many an age ago, or rather never have permitted that such a thing as we call an age could possibly have been.

"Our experience gives us not to observe any such destructive or remarkable changes in the course of nature, and this indeed (as was long ago foretold) is the great argument of the Atheistical scoffers in these latter days, that things remain as they were from the beginning of the creation to this day. But let it be soberly weighed, how it is possible that the general consistency, which we observe in things throughout the universe, and their steady orderly posture, can stand with this momently increase of motion.

"For we see when we throw a stone out of our hand, whatever of the impressed force it imparts to the air, through which it makes its way, or whatever degree of it vanishes of itself, it yet retains a part a considerable time, which carries it all the length of its journey, and does not vanish and die away on the sudden. So when we here consider in the continual momently renewal of the same force, always necessarily going forth from the same mighty agent, without any moderation or restraint, that every following *impetus* doth so immediately overtake the former, that whatever we can suppose lost, is yet abundantly over-supplied; upon the whole, it cannot fail to be ever growing, and before now must have grown to that all-destroying excess before mentioned.

"It is therefore evident, that as without the supposition of a *self-active* Being, there could be no such thing as *motion*, so without the supposition of an *intelligent* Being, (that is, that the same Being be both *self-active* and *intelligent*,) there could be no *regular* motion, such as is absolutely necessary to the forming and continuing of any of the compacted bodily substances, which our eyes behold every day; yea, or of any whatsoever, suppose we their figures, their shapes, to be as rude, as deformed, and useless as we can imagine, much less such as the exquisite compositions, and the exact order of things in the universe do evidently require and discover." (HOWE'S *Living Temple.*)

The proof that the original cause of all things is an intelligent Being, alluded to above by Dr. S. Clarke, as exhibited by the excellent variety, order, beauty, and wonderful contrivance and fitness of all things in the world to their proper and respective ends, has, from the copious and almost infinite illustration of which it is capable, been made a distinc-

branch of theological science. It is the most obvious and popular, and therefore the most useful argument in favour of the intelligence of that Being of infinite perfections, we call God; it is that to which the Holy Scriptures refer us for the confirmation of their own doctrine on this subject, and it has been constantly resorted to by all writers on this first principle of religion in every age. When it has been considered separately, and the proofs from nature have been largely given, it has been designated "Natural Theology," and has given rise to many important works, equally entertaining, instructive, and convincing. (4) The basis, and indeed the plan, of Dr. Paley's Natural Theology, are found in the third and following chapters of Howe's Living Temple; but the outline has been filled up, and the subject expanded by that able writer with great felicity of illustration, and acute and powerful argument. From the platform of Paley's work, as it may be found in "the Living Temple," I shall give a few extracts, which, though they appear in the "Natural Theology" in a more expansive form, strengthened by additional examples, and clothed in some of the instances given with a more correct philosophy, are not superseded. They bear upon the conclusion with an irresistible force, and are expressed with a noble eloquence, though in language a little antiquated in structure.

"As nothing can be produced without a cause, so no cause can work above or beyond its own capacity and natural aptitude. Whatsoever therefore is ascribed to any cause, above and beyond its ability, all that surplusage is ascribed to no cause at all: and so an effect, in that part at least, were supposed without a cause. And if it then follow when an effect is produced, that it had a cause; why doth it not equally follow, when an effect is produced, having manifest characters of wisdom and design upon it, that it had a wise and designing cause? If it be said, there are some fortuitous or casual (at least undesigned) productions, that look like the effects of wisdom and contrivance, but indeed are not, as the birds so orderly and seasonably making their nests, the bees their comb, and the spider its web, which are capable of no design, that exception needs to be well proved before it be admitted; and that it be plainly demonstrated, both that these creatures are not capable of design, and that there is not a universal, designing cause, from whose directive as well as operative influence, no imaginable effect or event can be exempted. In which case it will no more be necessary, that every creature that is observed steadily to work toward an end, should itself design and know it, than that an artificer's tools should know what he is doing with them; but if they do not, it is plain he must. And surely

(4) See Boyle on Final Causes, Ray's Wisdom of God in the Creation, Derham's Astro and Physico Theology, Sturm's Reflections, Paley's Natural Theology, &c.

it lies upon them who so except, to prove in this case what they say and not to be so precarious as to beg, or think us so easy as to grant, so much, only because they have thought fit to say it, or would fain have it so, that is, that this or that strange event happened without any designing cause.

"But, however, I would demand, of such as make this exception, whether they think there be any effect at all, to which a designing cause was necessary, or which they will judge impossible to have been otherwise produced than by the direction and contrivance of wisdom and counsel? I little doubt but there are thousands of things, laboured and wrought by the hand of man, which they would presently, upon first sight, pronounce to be the effects of skill, and not of chance; yea, if they only considered their frame and shape, though they understood not their use and end, they would surely think at least some effects or other sufficient to argue to us a designing cause. And would they but soberly consider and resolve what characters or footsteps of wisdom and design might be reckoned sufficient to put us out of doubt, would they not, upon comparing, be brought to acknowledge that there are no where *any* more conspicuous and manifest, than in the things daily in view, that go ordinarily, with us, under the name of *works of nature?* Whence it is plainly consequent, that what men commonly call *universal nature*, if they would be content no longer to lurk in the darkness of an obscure and uninterpreted word, they must confess is nothing else but *common providence*, that is, the *universal power* which is every where active in the world, in conjunction with the *unerring wisdom* which guides and moderates all its exertions and operations, or the wisdom which directs and governs that power. They must therefore see cause to acknowledge that an exact order and disposition of parts in very neat and elegant compositions, do plainly argue wisdom and skill in the contrivance; only they will distinguish and say, It is so in the effects of *art*, but not of *nature*. What is this, but to deny in particular what they granted in general? To make what they have said signify nothing more than if they had said, such exquisite order of parts is the effect of wisdom, where it is the effect of wisdom; but it is not the effect of wisdom, where it is not the effect of wisdom; and to trifle, instead of giving a reason why things are so? And whence take they their advantage for this trifling, or do they hope to hide their folly in it, but that they think while what is meant by art is known, what is meant by nature cannot be known? But if it be not known, how can they tell but their distinguishing members are coincident, and run into one? Yea, and if they would allow the thing itself to speak, and the effect to confess and dictate the name of its own cause, how plain is it that they do run into one; and that the expression imports no impropriety, which we somewhere find in Cicero, *The art of nature;* or rather, that nature

is nothing else but Divine art, at least in as near an analogy as between any things Divine and human? But, that this matter (even the thing itself, waiving for the present the consideration of names,) may be a little more narrowly discussed and searched into, let some curious piece of workmanship be offered to such a skeptic's view, the making whereof he did not see, nor of any thing like it, and we will suppose him not told that this was made by the hand of any man, nor that he hath any thing to guide his judgment about the way of its becoming what it is, but only his own view of the thing itself; and yet he shall presently, without hesitation, pronounce, this was the effect of much skill. I would here inquire, Why do you so pronounce? Or, What is the reason of this your judgment? Surely he would not say he hath no reason at all for this so confident and unwavering determination; for then he would not be determined, but speak by chance, and be indifferent to say that or any thing else. Somewhat or other there must be, that, when he is asked, is this the effect of skill? shall so suddenly and irresistibly captivate him into an assent that it is so, that he cannot think otherwise. Nay, if a thousand men were asked the same question, they would as undoubtingly say the same thing; and then, since there is a reason for this judgment, what can be devised to be the reason, but that there are so manifest characters and evidences of skill in the composure, as are not attributable to any thing else? Now here I would farther demand, Is there any thing in this reason? Yea, or No? Doth it signify any thing, or is it of any value for the purpose for which it is alleged? Surely it is of very great, inasmuch as, when it is considered, it leaves it not in a man's power to think any thing else; and what can be said more potently and efficaciously to demonstrate? But now, if this reason signify any thing, it signifies thus much; that wheresoever there are equal characters, and evidences of skill, a skilful agent must be acknowledged. And so it will, (in spite of cavil,) conclude universally, and abstractedly, from what we can suppose distinctly signified by the terms of *art* and *nature*, that whatsoever effect hath such, or equal characters of skill upon it, did proceed from a skilful cause. That is, that if this effect be said to be from a skilful cause, as having manifest characters of skill upon it, then every such effect, that hath equally manifest characters of skill upon it, must be, with equal reason, concluded to be from a skilful cause.

"We will acknowledge skill to act, and wit to contrive, to be very disinguishable things, and in reference to some works, (as the making some curious *automaton*, or self-moving engine,) are commonly lodged in divers subjects; that is, the contrivance exercises the wit and invention of one, and the making, the manual skill and dexterity of others: but the manifest characters of both will be seen in the effect.—That is, the curious elaborateness of each several part shows the latter,

and the order and dependence of parts, and their conspiracy to one common end, the former. Each betokens design; or at least the smith or carpenter must be understood to design his own part, that is, to do as he was directed: both together do plainly bespeak an agent that knew what he did; and that the thing was not done by chance, or was not the casual product of only being busy at random, or making a careless stir, without aiming at any thing. And this, no man that is in his wits would, upon sight of the whole frame, more doubt to assent unto, than that two and two make four. And he would certainly be thought mad, that should profess to think that only by some one's making a bustle among several small fragments of brass, iron, and wood, these parts happened to be thus curiously formed, and came together into this frame, of their own accord.

"Or lest this should be thought to intimate too rude a representation of their conceit who think this world to have fallen into this frame and order wherein it is, by the agitation of the moving parts, or particles of matter, without the direction of a wise mover; and that we may also make the case as plain as is possible to the most ordinary capacity, we will suppose (for instance) that one who had never before seen a *watch*, or any thing of that sort, hath now this little engine first offered to his view; can we doubt, but that he would, upon the mere sight of its figure, structure, and the very curious workmanship which we will suppose appearing in it, presently acknowledge the artificer's hand? But if he were also made to understand the use and purpose for which it serves, and it were distinctly shown him how each thing contributes, and all things in this little fabric concur to this purpose, the exact measuring and dividing of time by minutes, hours, and months, he would certainly both confess and praise the great ingenuity of the first inventor. But now if a bystander, beholding him in this admiration, would undertake to show a profounder reach and strain of wit, and should say, Sir, you are mistaken concerning the composition of this so much admired piece; it was not made or designed by the hand or skill of any one; there were only an innumerable company of little atoms or very small bodies, much too small to be perceived by your sense, that were busily frisking and plying to and fro about the place of its nativity; and by a strange chance or a stranger fate, and the necessary laws of that motion which they were unavoidably put into, by a certain boisterous, undesigning mover, they fell together into this small bulk, so as to compose this very shape and figure, and with this same number and order of parts which you now behold: one squadron of these busy particles (little thinking what they were about) agreeing to make one wheel, and another a second, in that proportion which you see: others of them also falling and becoming fixed in so happy a posture and situation as to describe the several figures by which the little mov

ing fingers point out the hours of the day, and the day of the month: and all conspired to fall together, each into its own place, in so lucky a juncture, as that the regular motion failed not to ensue which we see is now observed in it,—what man is either so wise or so foolish, (for it is hard to determine whether the excess or the defect should best qualify him to be of this faith,) as to be capable of being made believe this piece of natural history? And if any one should give this account of the production of such a trifle, would he not be thought in jest? But if he persist, and solemnly profess that thus he takes it to have been, would he not be thought in good earnest mad? And let but any sober reason judge whether we have not unspeakably more madness to contend against in such as suppose this world, and the bodies of living creatures, to have fallen into this frame and orderly disposition of parts wherein they are, without the direction of a wise and designing cause? And whether there be not an incomparably greater number of most wild and arbitary suppositions in *their fiction* than in *this?* Beside the innumerable supposed repetitions of the same strange chances all the world over; even as numberless, not only as productions, but as the changes that continually happen to all the things produced. And if the concourse of atoms could make this world, why not (for it is but little to mention such a thing as this,) a porch, or a temple, or a house, or a city, as Tully speaks, which were less operous, and much more easy performances?

"It is not to be supposed that all should be astronomers, anatomists, or natural philosophers, that shall read these lines; and therefore it is intended not to insist upon particulars, and to make as little use as is possible of terms that would only be agreeable to that supposition. But surely such general, easy reflections on the frame of the universe, and the order of parts in the bodies of all sorts of living creatures, as the meanest ordinary understanding is capable of, would soon discover incomparably greater evidence of wisdom and design in the contrivance of these, than in that of a watch or a clock. And if there were any whose understandings are but of that size and measure as to suppose that the whole frame of the heavens serves to no other purpose than to be of some such use to us mortals here on earth as that instrument; if they would but allow themselves leisure to think and consider, they might discern the most convincing and amazing discoveries of wise contrivance and design (as well as the vastest might and power) in disposing things into so apt a subserviency to that meaner end; and that so exact a knowledge is had thereby of times and seasons, days and years, as that the simplest idiot in a country may be able to tell you, when the light of the sun is withdrawn from his eyes, at what time it will return, and when it will look in at such a window, and when at the other; and by what degrees his days and nights shall either be increased or dimi

nished; and what proportion of time he shall have for his labours in this season of the year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear that it shall ever fall out otherwise.

"For let us suppose (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see,) that in some part of the air near this earth, and within such limits as that the whole scene might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the sun, and suppose it fixed as a centre to another body or moving about that other as its centre, (as this or that hypothesis best pleases us,) which we could plainly perceive to be a proportionably little earth, beautified with little trees and woods, flowery fields and flowing rivulets, with larger lakes into which these discharge themselves; and suppose we see other planets all of proportionable bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or sun, so as to measure their shorter and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed circuits;—would they not presently, and with great amazement, confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a Posidonius or any mortal? And have we not in the present frame of things a demonstration of wisdom and counsel, as far exceeding that which is now supposed, as the making some toy or bauble to please a child is less an argument of wisdom than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use? Or if we could suppose this present state of things to have but newly begun, and ourselves pre-existent, so that we could take notice of the very passing of things out of horrid confusion into the comely order they are now in, would not this put the matter out of doubt? But might what would yesterday have been the effect of wisdom, better have been brought about by chance, five or six thousand years, or any longer time ago? It speaks not want of evidence in the thing, but want of consideration, and of exercising our understandings, if what were *new* would not only convince but astonish, and what is *old*, of the same importance, doth not so much as convince!

"And let them that understand any thing of the composition of a human body (or indeed of any living creature) but bethink themselves whether there be not equal contrivance, at least, appearing in the composure of that admirable fabric, as of any the most admired machine or engine devised and made by human skill and wit. If we pitch upon any thing of known and common use, as suppose again, a clock or watch, which is no sooner seen than it is acknowledged (as hath been said) the effect of a designing cause; will we not confess as much of the body of a man? Yea, what comparison is there, when in the tructure of some one single member, as a hand, a foot, an eye, or ear,

there appears upon a diligent search, unspeakably greater curiosity, whether we consider the variety of parts, their exquisite figuration, or their apt disposition to the distinct uses and ends these members serve for, than is to be seen in any clock or watch? Concerning which uses of the several parts in man's body, Galen, so largely discoursing in seventeen books, inserts on the leg, this epiphonema, upon the mention of one particular instance of our most wise Maker's provident care:—'Unto whom (saith he) I compose these commentaries,' (meaning his present work of unfolding the useful figuration of the human body,) 'as certain hymns, or songs of praise, esteeming true piety to consist in this, that I first may know, and then declare to others, his wisdom, power, providence, and goodness, than in sacrificing to him many hecatombs: and in the ignorance whereof there is greatest impiety, rather than in abstaining from sacrifice.' 'Nor,' (as he adds in the close of that excellent work,) 'is the most perfect natural artifice to be seen in man only; but you may find the like industrious design and wisdom of the Author, in any living creature which you shall please to dissect: and by how much the less it is, so much the greater admiration shall it excite in you; which those artists show, that describe some great thing (contractedly) in a very small space: as that person who lately engraved Phaeton carried in his chariot with his four horses upon a little ring—a most incredible sight! But there is nothing in matters of this nature more strange than in the structure of the leg of a flea.' How much more might it be said of all its inward parts? 'Therefore, (as he adds,) the greatest commodity of such a work accrues not to physicians, but to them who are studious of nature, namely, the knowledge of our Maker's perfection, and that (as he had said a little above) it establishes the principle of the most perfect theology; which theology is much more excellent than all medicine.'

"It were too great an undertaking, and beyond the designed limits of this discourse, (though it would be to excellent purpose, if it could be done without amusing terms, and in that easy, familiar way as to be capable of common use,) to pursue, and trace distinctly the prints and footsteps of the admirable wisdom which appears in the structure and frame of this outer temple. For even our bodies themselves are said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi, 19. And to dwell awhile in the contemplation and discovery of those numerous instances of most apparent, ungainsayable sagacity and providence which offer themselves to view in every part and particle of this fabric: how most commodiously all things are ordered in it! With how strangely cautious circumspection and foresight not only destructive, but even (perpetually) vexatious and afflicting incongruities are avoided and provided against. to pose ourselves upon the sundry obvious questions that might be put for the evincing of such provident foresight. As for instance, how

comes it to pass that the several parts which we find to be *double* in our bodies, are not *single* only? Is this altogether by chance? That there are two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands, feet, &c: what a miserable, shiftless creature had man been, if there had only been allowed him one foot! A seeing, hearing, talking, unmoving statue. That the hand is divided into fingers? Those so conveniently situate, one in so fitly opposite a posture to the rest?

"And what, if some one pair or other of these parts had been universally wanting? The hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears. How great a misery had it inferred upon mankind! and is it only a casualty that it is not so? That the back bone is composed of so many joints, (twenty-four, beside those of that which is the basis and sustainer of the whole,) and is not all of a piece, by which stooping, or any motion of the head or neck, diverse from that of the whole body, had been altogether impossible; that there is such variety and curiosity in the ways of joining the bones together in that, and other parts of the body, that in some parts they are joined by mere adherence of one to another, either with or without an intervening medium, and both these ways so diversely; that others are fastened together by proper jointing, so as to suit and be accompanied with motion, either more obscure or more manifest, and this, either by a deeper, or more superficial insertion of one bone into another, or by a mutual insertion, and that in different ways; and that all these should be so exactly accommodated to the several parts and uses to which they belong and serve;—was all this without design? Who that views the curious and apt texture of the eye, can think it was not made on purpose to see with; and the ear, upon the like view, for hearing, when so many things must concur that these actions might be performed by these organs, and are found to do so? Or who can think that the sundry little engines belonging to the eye were not made with design to move it upward, downward, to this side or that, or whirl it about as there should be occasion; without which instruments and their appendages, no such motion could have been? Who, that is not stupidly perverse, can think that the sundry inward parts (which it would require a volume distinctly to speak of, and but to mention them and their uses would too unproportionably swell this part of this discourse) were not made purposely by a designing agent, for the ends they so aptly and constantly serve for? The want of some one among divers whereof, or but a little misplacing or if things had been but a little otherwise than they are, had inferred an impossibility that such a creature as man could have subsisted, or been propagated upon the face of the earth. As what if there had not been such a receptacle prepared as the stomach is, and so formed and placed as it is, to receive and digest necessary nutriment? Had not the whole frame of man beside been in vain? Or what if the passage from

it downward had not been made somewhat a little ascending, so as to detain a convenient time what it received, but that what was taken in were suddenly transmitted? It is evident the whole structure had been ruined as soon as made. What, (to instance in what seems so small a matter,) if that little cover had been wanting at the entrance of that through which we breathe; (the depression whereof by the weight of what we eat or drink, shuts it, and prevents meat and drink from going down that way;) had not unavoidable suffocation ensued? And who can number the instances that can be given beside? Now when there is a concurrence of so many things absolutely necessary, (concerning which the common saying is as applicable, more frequently wont to be applied to matters of morality,—'Goodness is from the concurrence of all causes, evil, from any defect,') *each* so aptly and opportunely serving its own proper use, and *all*, one common end, certainly to say that so manifold, so regular and stated a subserviency to that end, and the end itself, were undesigned, and things casually fell out thus, is to say we know or care not what.

"We will only, before we close this consideration, concerning the mere frame of a human body, (which hath been so hastily and superficially proposed,) offer a supposition which is no more strange (excluding the vulgar notion by which nothing is strange, but what is not common) than the thing itself as it actually is; namely, that the whole more external covering of the body of a man were made, instead of skin and flesh, of some very transparent substance, flexible, but clear as very crystal; through which, and the other more inward (and as transparent) integuments, or enfoldings, we could plainly perceive the situation and order of all the internal parts, and how they each of them perform their distinct offices: if we could discern the continual motion of the blood, how it is conveyed, by its proper conduits, from its first source and fountain, partly downward to the lower entrails, (if rather it ascend not from thence, as at least what afterward becomes blood doth,) partly upward, to its admirable elaboratory, the heart; where it is refined and furnished with fresh vital spirits, and so transmitted thence by the distinct vessels, prepared for this purpose: could we perceive the curious contrivance of those little doors, by which it is let in and out, on this side and on that; the order and course of its circulation, its most commodious distribution by two social channels or conduit pipes, that every where accompany one another throughout the body: could we discern the curious artifice of the brain, its ways of purgation; and were it possible to pry into the secret chambers and receptacles of the less or more pure spirits there; perceive their manifold conveyances, and the rare texture of that *net*, commonly called the *wonderful one*: could we behold the veins, arteries, and nerves, all of them arising from their proper and distinct originals, and their orderly dispersion for the most

part by pairs, and conjugations, on this side and that, from the middle of the back; with the curiously wrought branches, which, supposing these to appear duly diversified, as so many more duskish strokes in this transparent frame they would be found to make throughout the whole of it; were every smaller fibre thus made at once discernible, especially those innumerable threads into which the spinal marrow is distributed at the bottom of the back: and could we, through the same medium, perceive those numerous little machines made to serve unto voluntary motions, (which in the whole body are computed, by some, to the number of four hundred and thirty, or thereabouts, or so many of them as, according to the present supposition, could possibly come in view,) and discern their composition, their various and elegant figures—round, square, long, triangular, &c, and behold them do their offices, and see how they ply to and fro, and work in their respective places, as any motion is to be performed by them: were all these things, I say, thus made liable to an easy and distinct view, who would not admiringly cry out, *How fearfully and wonderfully am I made?* And sure there is no man sober, who would not, upon such a sight, pronounce that man mad, that should suppose such a production to have been a mere undesigned casualty. At least, if there be any thing in the world that may be thought to carry sufficiently convincing evidences in it, of its having been made industriously, and on purpose, not by chance, would not this composition, thus offered to view, be esteemed to do so much more? Yea, and if it did only bear upon it characters equally evidential, of wisdom and design, with what doth certainly so, though in the lowest degree, it were sufficient to evince our present purpose. For if one such instance as this would bring the matter no higher than to a bare equality, that would at least argue a maker of man's body, as wise, and as properly designing as the artificer of any such slighter piece of workmanship, that may yet, certainly, be concluded the effect of skill and design. And then, enough might be said, from other instances, to manifest him unspeakably superior. And that the matter would be brought, at least, to an equality upon the supposition now made, there can be no doubt, if any one be judge that hath not abjured his understanding and his eyes together. And what then, if we lay aside that supposition, (which only somewhat gratifies fancy and imagination,) doth that alter the case? Or is there the less of wisdom and contrivance expressed in this work of forming man's body, only for that it is not so easily and suddenly obvious to our sight? Then we might with the same reason say, concerning some curious piece of carved work that is thought fit to be kept locked up in a cabinet, when we see it, that there was admirable workmanship shown in doing it; but as soon as it is again shut up in its repository, that there was none at all. Inasmuch as we speak of the objective characters of wisdom and design, that are in the thing itself.

(though they must some way or other come under our notice, otherwise we can be capable of arguing nothing from them, yet,) since we have sufficient assurance that there really are such characters in the structure of the body of man as have been mentioned, and a thousand more than have been thought necessary to be mentioned here; it is plain that the greater or less facility of finding them out, so that we be at a certainty that they are, (whether by the slower, or more gradual search of our own eyes, or by relying upon the testimony of such as have purchased themselves that satisfaction by their own labour and diligence,) is merely accidental to the thing itself we are discoursing of; and neither adds to, nor detracts from the rational evidence of the present argument. Or if it do either, the more abstruse paths of Divine wisdom in this, as in other things, do rather recommend it the more to our adoration and reverence, than if every thing were obvious, and lay open to the first glance of a more careless eye. The things which we are sure (or may be, if we do not shut our eyes) the wise Maker of this world hath done, do sufficiently serve to assure us, that he could have done this also; that is, have made every thing in the frame and shape of our bodies conspicuous in the way but now supposed, if he had thought it fit. He hath done greater things. And since he hath not thought *that* fit, we may be bold to say, the doing of it would signify more trifling, and less design. It gives us a more amiable and comely representation of the Being we are treating of, that his works are less for ostentation than use; and that his wisdom and other attributes appear in them rather to the instruction of sober, than the gratification of vain minds.

"We may therefore confidently conclude, that the figuration of the human body carries with it as manifest, unquestionable evidences of design, as any piece of human artifice, that most confessedly in the judgment of any man, doth so; and therefore had as certainly a designing cause. We may challenge the world to show a disparity, unless it be that the advantage is inconceivably great on our side. For would not any one that hath not abandoned both his reason and his modesty, be ashamed to confess and admire the skill that is shown in making a statue, or the picture of a man, that (as one ingeniously says) is but the shadow of his skin, and deny the wisdom that appears in the composure of his body itself, that contains so numerous and so various engines and instruments for sundry purposes in it, as that it is become an art, and a very laudable one, but to discover and find out the art and skill that are shown in the contrivance and formation of them?

"And now if any should be so incurably blind as not to perceive, or so perversely wilful as not to acknowledge, an appearance of wisdom in the frame and figuration of the body of an animal (peculiarly of man) more than equal to what appears in any the most exquisite piece of human artifice, and which no wit of man can ever fully imitate; although

as hath been said, an acknowledged equality would suffice to evince a wise Maker thereof, yet because it is the existence of God we are now speaking of, and that it is therefore not enough to evince, but to magnify the wisdom we would ascribe to him; we shall pass from the parts and frame to the consideration of the more principal powers and functions of terrestrial creatures; ascending from such as agree to the less perfect order of these, to those of the more perfect, namely, of man himself. And surely to have been the author of faculties that shall enable to such functions, will evidence a wisdom that defies our imitation, and will dismay the attempts of it.

"We begin with that of *growth*. Many sorts of rare engines we acknowledge contrived by the wit of man, but who hath ever made one that could grow, or that had in it a self-improving power? A tree, an herb, a pile of grass, may upon this account challenge all the world to make such a thing; that is, to implant the power of growing into any thing to which it *doth not* natively belong, or to make a thing to which *it doth*.

"By what art would they make a seed? And which way would they inspire it with a seminal form? And they that think this whole globe of the earth was compacted by the casual (or fatal) coalition of particles of matter, by what magic would they conjure up so many to come together as to make one clod? We vainly hunt with a lingering mind after miracles; if we did not more vainly mean by them nothing else but novelties, we are compassed about with such: and the greatest miracle is, that we see them not. You with whom the daily productions of nature (as you call it) are so cheap, see if you can do the like. Try your skill upon a rose. Yea, but you must have pre-existent matter? But can you ever prove the Maker of the world had so, or even defend the possibility of uncreated matter? And suppose they had the free grant of all the matter between the crown of their head and the moon, could they tell what to do with it, or how to manage it, so as to make it yield them one single flower, that they might glory in as their own production?

"And what mortal man, that hath reason enough about him to be serious, and to think awhile, would not even be amazed at the miracle of *nutrition*? Or that there are things in the world capable of nourishment? Or who would attempt an imitation here, or not despair to perform any thing like it? That is, to make any nourishable thing. Are we not here infinitely outdone? Do we not see ourselves compassed about with wonders, and are we not ourselves such, in that we see, and are creatures, from all whose parts there is a continual defluxion, and yet that receive a constant gradual supply and renovation, by which they are continued in the same state? as the bush burning but not consumed. It is easy to give an artificial frame to a thing that shall gradually decay and waste till it be quite gone, and disappear. You could

raise a structure of snow that would soon do that. But can your man ul skill compose a thing that, like our bodies, shall be continually melting away, and be continually repaired, through so long a tract of time? Nay, but can you tell how it is done? You know in what method, and by what instruments, food is received, concocted, separated, and so much as must serve for nourishment turned into chyle, and that into blood, first grosser, and then more refined, and that distributed into all parts for this purpose Yea, and what then? Therefore are you as wise as your Maker? Could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a liver, a heart, a vein, an artery? Or are you so very sure what the digestive quality is? Or if you are, and know what things best serve to maintain, to repair, or strengthen it, who implanted that quality? Both where it is so immediately useful, or in the other things you would use for the service of that? Or how, if such things had not been prepared to your hand, would you have devised to persuade the particles of matter into so useful and happy a conjuncture, as that such a quality might result? Or (to speak more suitably to the most) how, if you had not been shown the way, would you have thought it were to be done, or which way would you have gone to work, to turn meat and drink into flesh and blood?

"And what shall we say of *spontaneous motion*, wherewith we find also creatures endowed that are so mean and despicable in our eyes, (as well as ourselves,) that is, that so silly a thing as a fly, a gnat, &c, should have a power in it to move itself, or stop its own motion, at its own pleasure? How far have all attempted imitations in this kind fallen short of this perfection! And how much more excellent a thing is the smallest and most contemptible insect, than the most admired machine we ever heard or read of; (as Architas Tarentinus's dove so anciently celebrated, or more lately Regiomontanus's fly, or his eagle, or any the like;) not only as having this *peculiar power*, above any thing of this sort, but as having the *sundry other powers* beside, meeting in it, whereof these are wholly destitute?

"And should we go on to instance farther in the several powers of *sensation*, both external and internal, the various instincts, appetitions, passions, sympathies, antipathies, the powers of memory, (and we might add of speech,) that we find the inferior orders of creatures either generally furnished with, or some of them, as to this last, disposed unto; how should we even overdo the present business; and too needlessly insult over human wit, (which we must suppose to have already yielded the cause,) in challenging it to produce and offer to view a hearing, seeing engine, that can imagine, talk, is capable of hunger, thirst, of desire, anger, fear, grief, &c, as its own creature, concerning which it may glory and say, *I have done this!*

"Is it so admirable a performance, and so ungainsayable an evidence of skill and wisdom, with much labour and long travail of mind: a busy

restless agitation of working thoughts; the often renewal of frustrated attempts: the varying of defeated trials, this way and that, at length to hit upon, and by much pains, and with a slow, gradual progress, by the use of who can tell how many sundry sorts of instruments or tools, by long hewing, hammering, turning, filing, to compose one only single machine of such a frame and structure as that by the frequent reinforcement of a skilful hand, it may be capable of some (and that otherwise but a very short-lived) motion? And is it no argument, or effect of wisdom, so easily and certainly, without labour, error, or disappointment, to frame both so infinite a variety of kinds, and so innumerable individuals of every such kind of living creatures, that not only with the greatest facility can move themselves with so many sorts of motion downward, upward, to and fro, this way or that, with a progressive or circular, a swifter or a slower motion, at their own pleasure; but can also grow, propagate, see, hear, desire, joy, &c? Is this no work of wisdom, but only either blind fate or chance? Of how strangely perverse and odd a complexion is that understanding, (if yet it may be called an understanding) that can make this judgment?

"But because whatsoever comes under the name of cogitation, properly taken, is assigned to some higher cause than mechanism; and that there are operations belonging to man, which lay claim to a reasonable soul, as the immediate principle and author of them, we have yet this farther step to advance, that is, to consider the most apparent evidence we have of a wise, designing agent, in the powers and nature of this more excellent, and, among other things, more obvious to our notice, the noblest of his productions.

"And were it not for the slothful neglect of the most to study themselves, we should not have need to recount unto men the common and well-known abilities and excellencies which peculiarly belong to their own nature. They might take notice, without being told, that first, as to their *intellectual faculty*, they have somewhat about them that can think, understand, frame notions of things; that can rectify or supply the false or defective representations which are made to them by their external senses and fancies; that can conceive of things far above the reach and sphere of sense, the moral good or evil of actions or inclinations, and what there is in them of rectitude or pravity; whereby they can animadvert, and cast their eye inward upon themselves; observe the good or evil acts or inclinations, the knowledge, ignorance, dulness, vigour, tranquillity, trouble, and generally, the perfections or imperfections of their own minds; that can apprehend the general natures of things, the future existence of what yet is not, with the future appearance of that which, to us, as yet, appears not.

"They may take notice of their *power of comparing things*, of discerning and making a judgment of their agreements and disagreements

their proportions and dispositions to one another; of affirming or denying this or that, concerning such or such things; and of pronouncing, with more or less confidence, concerning the truth or falsehood of such affirmations or negations.

"And moreover, of their *power of arguing*, and inferring one thing from another, so as from one plain and evident principle to draw forth a long chain of consequences, that may be discerned to be linked therewith.

"They have withal to consider the liberty and the large capacity of *the human will*, which, when it is itself, rejects the dominion of any other than the supreme Lord's, and refuses satisfaction in any other than the supreme and most comprehensive good.

"And upon even so hasty and transient a view of a thing furnished with such powers and faculties, we have sufficient occasion to bethink ourselves, How came such a thing as this into being; whence did it spring, or to what original doth it owe itself? More particularly we have here two things to be remembered—That, notwithstanding so high excellencies, the soul of man doth yet appear to be a caused being, that some time had a beginning—That by them it is sufficiently evident, that it owes itself to a wise and intelligent cause."

The instance of a watch, chosen by Howe for the illustration of his argument, that evidences of *design*, in any production, are evidences of a *designing cause*; is thus strikingly amplified and applied by Paley to refute the leading Atheistic theories:—"The mechanism of the watch being once observed and understood, the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker; that there must have existed, at some time and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction and designed its use.

"Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed: all this being no more than what is true of some exquisite remains of ancient art, of some lost arts, and, to the generality of mankind, of the more curious productions of modern manufacture. Does one man in a million know how oval frames are turned? Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill, if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some place or other. Nor can I perceive that it varies at all the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent, or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing, in some respects, a different nature.

"Neither, secondly, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch

sometimes went wrong, or that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design, and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not. It is not necessary that a machine be perfect, in order to show with what design it was made: still less necessary, where the only question is, whether it were made with any design at all.

"Nor, thirdly, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered in what manner they conduced to the general effect; or even some parts concerning which we could not ascertain, whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. For, as to the first branch of the case, if, by the loss or disorder, or decay of the parts in question, the movement of the watch were found in fact to be stopped, or disturbed, or retarded, no doubt would remain in our minds as to the utility or intention of these parts, although we should be unable to investigate the manner according to which or the connection by which, the ultimate effect depended upon their action or assistance; and the more complex is the machine, the more likely is this obscurity to arise. Then, as to the second thing supposed, namely, that there were parts which might be spared without prejudice to the movement of the watch, and that we had proved this by experiment,—these superfluous parts, even if we were completely assured that they were such, would not vacate the reasoning which we had instituted concerning other parts. The indication of contrivance remained, with respect to them, nearly as it was before.

"Nor, fourthly, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch, with its various machinery, accounted for by being told that it was *one out of possible combinations* of material forms; that whatever he had found, in the place where he had found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration might be the structure now exhibited, namely, of the works of a watch, as well as a different structure.

"Nor, fifthly, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things *a principle of order*, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to himself an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the intelligence of the watchmaker.

"Sixthly, he would be surprised to hear, that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only *a motive to induce the mind to think so.*

"And not less surprised to be informed, that the watch in his hand was nothing more than the result of the *laws of metallic nature.* It is

a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient, operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent; for it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds: it implies a power; for it is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the *law* does nothing,—is nothing. The expression 'the law of metallic nature,' may sound strange and harsh to a philosophic ear, but it seems quite as justifiable as some others which are more familiar to him, such as 'the law of vegetable nature,' 'the law of animal nature,' or indeed as 'the law of nature' in general, when assigned as the cause of phenomena, in exclusion of agency and power; or when it is substituted into the place of these.

"Neither, lastly, would our observer be driven out of his conclusion or from his confidence in its truth, by being told that he knew nothing at all about the matter. He knows enough for his argument; he knows the utility of the end; he knows the subserviency and adaptation of the means to the end. These points being known, his ignorance of other points, his doubts concerning other points, affect not the certainty of his reasoning. The consciousness of knowing little need not beget a distrust of that which he does know.

"Suppose, in the next place, that the person who found the watch should, after some time, discover that, in addition to all the properties which he had hitherto observed in it, it possessed the unexpected property of producing, in the course of its movement, another watch like itself; (the thing is conceivable;) that it contained within it a mechanism, a system of parts, a mould, for instance, or a complex adjustment of lathes, files, and other tools, evidently and separately calculated for this purpose; let us inquire what effect ought such a discovery to have upon his former conclusion.

"The first effect would be to increase his admiration of the contrivance, and his conviction of the consummate skill of the contriver. Whether he regarded the object of the contrivance, the distinct apparatus, the intricate, yet in many parts intelligible, mechanism, by which it was carried on, he would perceive in this new observation, nothing but an additional reason for doing what he had already done; for referring the construction of the watch to design and to supreme art. If that construction *without* this property, or, which is the same thing, before this property had been noticed, proved intention and art to have been employed about it; still more strong would the proof appear, when he came to the knowledge of this farther property, the crown and perfection of all the rest.

"He would reflect, that though the watch before him were, *in some sense*, the maker of the watch which was fabricated in the course of its movements, yet it was in a very different sense from that in which a carpenter, for instance, is the maker of a chair; the author of its con

trivance, the cause of the relation of its parts to their use. With respect to these, the first watch was no cause at all to the second; in no such sense as this was it the author of the constitution and order, either of the parts which the new watch contained, or of the parts by the aid and instrumentality of which it was produced. We might possibly say, but with great latitude of expression, that a stream of water ground corn: but no latitude of expression would allow us to say, no stretch of conjecture could lead us to think, that the stream of water built the mill, though it were too ancient for us to know who the builder was. What the stream of water does in the affair is neither more nor less than this: by the application of an unintelligent impulse to a mechanism previously arranged, arranged independently of it, and arranged by intelligence, an effect is produced, namely, the corn is ground. But the effect results from the arrangement. The force of the stream cannot be said to be the cause or author of the effect, still less of the arrangement. Understanding and plan in the formation of the mill were not the less necessary, for any share which the water has in grinding the corn: yet is this share the same as that which the watch would have contributed to the production of the new watch, upon the supposition assumed in the last section. Therefore,

"Though it be now no longer probable, that the individual watch which our observer had found, was made immediately by the hand of an artificer, yet doth not this alteration in any wise affect the inference, that an artificer had been orginally employed and concerned in the production. The argument from design remains as it was. Marks of design and contrivance are no more accounted for now than they were before. In the same thing, we may ask for the cause of different properties. We may ask for the cause of the colour of a body, of its hardness, of its heat; and these causes may be all different. We are now asking for the cause of that subserviency to a use, that relation to an end which we have marked in the watch before us. No answer is given to this question by telling us that a preceding watch produced it. There cannot be design without a designer; contrivance without a contriver; order without choice; arrangement without any thing capable of arranging; subserviency and relation to a purpose, without that which could intend a purpose; means suitable to an end, and executing their office in accomplishing that end, without the end ever having been contemplated, or the means accommodated to it. Arrangement, disposition of parts, subserviency of means to an end, relation of instruments to a use, imply the presence of intelligence and mind. No one, therefore, can rationally believe, that the insensible, inanimate watch, from which the watch before us issued, was the proper cause of the mechanism we so much admire in it; could be truly said to have constructed the instrument, disposed its parts, assigned their office, determined their order, action

and mutual dependency, combined their several motions into one result, and that also a result connected with the utilities of other beings. All these properties, therefore, are as much unaccounted for as they were before.

"Nor is any thing gained by running the difficulty farther back, that is, by supposing the watch before us to have been produced from another watch, that from a former, and so on indefinitely. Our going back ever so far brings us no nearer to the least degree of satisfaction upon the subject. Contrivance is still unaccounted for. We still want a contriver. A designing mind is neither supplied by this supposition, nor dispensed with. If the difficulty were diminished the farther we went back, by going back indefinitely we might exhaust it. And this is the only case to which this sort of reasoning applies. Where there is a tendency, or, as we increase the number of terms, a continual approach toward a limit, *there*, by supposing the number of terms to be what is called infinite, we may conceive the limit to be attained: but where there is no such tendency or approach, nothing is effected by lengthening the series. There is no difference as to the point in question, (whatever there may be as to many points,) between one series and another; between a series which is finite, and a series which is infinite. A chain composed of an infinite number of links, can no more support itself, than a chain composed of a finite number of links. And of this we are assured, (though we never *can* have tried the experiment,) because, by increasing the number of links, from ten, for instance, to a hundred, from a hundred to a thousand, &c, we make not the smallest approach, we observe not the smallest tendency toward self support. There is no difference in this respect (yet there may be a great difference in several respects) between a chain of a greater or less length, between one chain and another, between one that is finite and one that is infinite. This very much resembles the case before us. The machine, which we are inspecting, demonstrates, by its construction, contrivance, and design. Contrivance must have had a contriver; design a designer, whether the machine immediately proceeded from another machine or not. That circumstance alters not the case. That other machine may, in like manner, have proceeded from a former machine: nor does that alter the case: contrivance must have had a contriver. That former one from one preceding it: no alteration still: a contriver is still necessary. No tendency is perceived, no approach toward a diminution of this necessity. It is the same with any and every succession of these machines; a succession of ten, of a hundred, of a thousand; with one series as with another; a series which is finite as with a series which is infinite. In whatever other respects they may differ, in this they do not. In all equally, contrivance and design are unaccounted for.

"The question is not simply, How came the first watch into exist-

ence? which question, it may be pretended, is done away by supposing the series of watches thus produced from one another to have been infinite, and consequently to have had no such *first*, for which it was necessary to provide a cause. This perhaps would have been nearly the state of the question, if nothing had been before us but an unorganized, unmechanized substance, without mark or indication of contrivance. It might be difficult to show that such substance could not have existed from eternity, either in succession, (if it were possible, which I think it is not, for unorganized bodies to spring from one another,) or by individual perpetuity. But that is not the question now. To suppose it to be so, is to suppose that it made no difference whether we had found a watch or a stone. As it is, the metaphysics of that question have no place; for in the watch which we are examining, are seen contrivance, design; an end, a purpose; means for the end, adaptation to the purpose. And the question, which irresistibly presses upon our thoughts, is, whence this contrivance and design? The thing required is the intending mind, the adapting hand, the intelligence by which that hand was directed. This question, this demand, is not shaken off, by increasing a number or succession of substances, destitute of these properties; nor the more by increasing that number to infinity. If it be said, that, upon the supposition of one watch being produced from another in the course of that other's movements, and by means of the mechanism within it, we have a cause for the watch in my hand, viz. the watch from which it proceeded, I deny, that for the design, the contrivance, the suitableness of means to an end, the adaptation of instruments to a use, (all which we discover in the watch,) we have any cause whatever. It is in vain, therefore, to assign a series of such causes, or to allege that a series may be carried back to infinity; for I do not admit that we have yet any cause at all of the phenomena, still less any series of causes either finite or infinite. Here is contrivance, but no contriver; proofs of design, but no designer.

"Our observer would farther also reflect, that the maker of the watch before him was, in truth and reality, the maker of every watch produced from it; there being no difference (except that the latter manifests a more exquisite skill) between the making of another watch with his own hands, by the mediation of files, lathes, chisels, &c, and the disposing, fixing, and inserting of these instruments, or of others equivalent to them, in the body of the watch already made, in such a manner as to form a new watch in the course of the movements which he had given to the old one. It is only working by one set of tools instead *of* another.

"The conclusion which the *first* examination of the watch, of its works, construction and movement, suggested, was, that it must have had, for the cause and author of that construction, an artificer, who

understood its mechanism, and designed its use. This conclusion is invincible. A *second* examination presents us with a new discovery. The watch is found, in the course of its movement, to produce another watch, similar to itself: and not only so, but we perceive in it a system of organization, separately calculated for that purpose. What effect would this discovery have, or ought it to have, upon our former inference? What, as hath already been said, but to increase, beyond measure, our admiration of the skill, which had been employed in the formation of such a machine? Or shall it, instead of this, all at once turn us round to an opposite conclusion, viz. that no art or skill whatever has been concerned in the business, although all other evidences of art and skill remain as they were, and this last and supreme piece of art be now added to the rest? Can this be maintained without absurdity? Yet this is Atheism."

If the argument is so powerful, when a work of art merely is made its basis; it is rendered much more convincing when it is transferred to the works of nature; because ends more singular are, in an infinite number of instances, there proposed, and are accomplished by contrivances much more curious and difficult. In the quotation above given from Howe, the *eye*, the parts of the body which are *double*, and the construction of the *spine*, are adduced among others as striking instances of a *contrivance* superior to the art of man, and as evidently denoting forethought and plan, the attributes not of *intelligence* only, but of an intelligence of an infinitely superior order. These instances have been admirably wrought up by the master hand which furnished the last quotation.

We begin with the human *eye*.

"The contrivances of nature surpass the contrivances of art, in the complexity, subtilty, and curiosity of the mechanism; and still more, if possible, do they go beyond them in number and variety; yet in a multitude of cases, are not less evidently mechanical, not less evidently contrivances, not less evidently accommodated to their end, or suited to their office, than are the most perfect productions of human ingenuity.

"I know no better method of introducing so large a subject, than that of comparing a single thing with a single thing; an eye, for example, with a telescope. As far as the examination of the instrument goes, there is precisely the same proof that the eye was made for vision, as there is that the telescope was made for assisting it. They are made upon the same principles; both being adjusted to the laws by which the transmission and refraction of rays of light are regulated. I speak not of the origin of the laws themselves; but such laws being fixed, the construction, in both cases, is adapted to them. For instance; these laws require, in order to produce the same effect, that the rays of light, in passing from water into the eye, should be refracted by a more convex

surface than when it passes out of air into the eye. Accordingly we find, that the eye of a fish, in that part of it called the crystalline lens, is much rounder than the eye of terrestrial animals. What plainer manifestation of design can there be than this difference? What could a mathematical instrument maker have done more, to show his knowledge of his principle, his application of that knowledge, his suiting of his means to his end; I will not say, to display the compass or excellency of his skill and art, for in these all comparison is indecorous, but to testify counsel, choice, consideration, purpose?

"To some it may appear a difference sufficient to destroy all similitude between the eye and the telescope, that the one is a perceiving organ, the other an unperceiving instrument. The fact is, that they are both instruments. And, as to the mechanism, at least as to mechanism being employed, and even as to the kind of it, this circumstance varies not the analogy at all: for observe, what the constitution of the eye is. It is necessary, in order to produce distinct vision, that an image or picture of the object be formed at the bottom of the eye. Whence this necessity arises, or how the picture is connected with the sensation, or contributes to it, it may be difficult, nay, we will confess, if you please, impossible for us to search out. But the present question is not concerned in the inquiry. It may be true, that, in this, and in other instances, we trace mechanical contrivance a certain way; and that then we come to something which is not mechanical, or which is inscrutable. But this affects not the certainty of our investigation, as far as we have gone. The difference between an animal and an automatic statue, consists in this,—that in the animal, we trace the mechanism to a certain point, and then we are stopped; either the mechanism becoming too subtile for our discernment, or something else beside the known laws of mechanism taking place; whereas, in the automaton, for the comparatively few motions of which it is capable, we trace the mechanism throughout. But, up to the limit, the reasoning is as clear and certain in the one case as the other. In the example before us, it is a matter of certainty, because it is a matter which experience and observation demonstrate, that the formation of an image at the bottom of the eye is necessary to perfect vision. The image itself can be shown. Whatever affects the distinctness of the image, affects the distinctness of the vision. The formation then of such an image being necessary (no matter how) to the sense of sight, and to the exercise of that sense, the apparatus by which it is formed is constructed and put together, not only with infinitely more art, but upon the self-same principles of art, as in the telescope or camera obscura. The perception arising from the image may be laid out of the question; for the production of the image, these are instruments of the same kind. The end is the same; the means are the same. The purpose in both is alike; the contrivance

for accomplishing that purpose is in both alike. The lenses of the telescope, and the humours of the eye, bear a complete resemblance to one another, in their figure, their position, and in their power over the rays of light, viz. in bringing each pencil to a point at the right distance from the lens; namely, in the eye, at the exact place where the membrane is spread to receive it. How is it possible, under circumstances of such close affinity, and under the operation of an equal evidence, to exclude contrivance from the one; yet to acknowledge the proof of contrivance having been employed, as the plainest and clearest of all propositions in the other?

"The resemblance between the two cases is still more accurate, and obtains in more points than we have yet represented, or than we are, on the first view of the subject, aware of. In dioptric telescopes there is an imperfection of this nature. Pencils of light, in passing through glass lenses, are separated into different colours, thereby tinging the object, especially the edges of it, as if it were viewed through a prism. To correct this inconvenience had been long a desideratum in the art. At last it came into the mind of a sagacious optician, to inquire how this matter was managed in the eye; in which there was exactly the same difficulty to contend with as in the telescope. His observation taught him, that, in the eye, the evil was cured by combining together lenses composed of different substances, i. e. of substances which possessed different refracting powers. Our artist borrowed from thence his hint; and produced a correction of the defect by imitating, in glasses made from different materials, the effects of the different humours through which the rays of light pass before they reach the bottom of the eye. Could this be in the eye without purpose, which suggested to the optician the only effectual means of attaining that purpose?

"But farther; there are other points, not so much perhaps of strict resemblance between the two, as of superiority of the eye over the telescope; yet of a superiority, which, being founded in the laws that regulate both, may furnish topics of fair and just comparison. Two things were wanted to the eye, which were not wanted, at least in the same degree, to the telescope; and these were, the adaptation of the organ, first, to different degrees of light; and secondly, to the vast diversity of distance at which objects are viewed by the naked eye, viz. from a few inches to as many miles. These difficulties present not themselves to the maker of the telescope. He wants all the light he can get; and he never directs his instrument to objects near at hand. In the eye, both these cases were to be provided for; and for the purpose of providing for them a subtile and appropriate mechanism is introduced.

"In order to exclude excess of light, when it is excessive, and to render objects visible under obscurer degrees of it, when no more can be had, the hole or aperture in the eye, through which the light enters, is

so formed, as to contract or dilate itself for the purpose of admitting a greater or less number of rays at the same time. The chamber of the eye is a camera obscura, which, when the light is too small, can enlarge its opening; when too strong, can again contract it; and that without any other assistance than that of its own exquisite machinery. It is farther also, in the human subject, to be observed, that this hole in the eye, which we call the pupil, under all its different dimensions, retains its exact circular shape. This is a structure extremely artificial. Let an artist only try to execute the same. He will find that his threads and strings must be disposed with great consideration and contrivance, to make a circle, which shall continually change its diameter, yet preserve its form. This is done in the eye by an application of fibres, i. e. of strings, similar, in their position and action, to what an artist would and must employ, if he had the same piece of workmanship to perform.

"The second difficulty which has been stated, was the suiting of the same organ to the perception of objects that lie near at hand, within a few inches, we will suppose, of the eye, and of objects which were placed at a considerable distance from it, that, for example, of as many furlongs: (I speak in both cases of the distance at which distinct vision can be exercised.) Now this, according to the principles of optics, that is, according to the laws by which the transmission of light is regulated (and these laws are fixed,) could not be done without the organ itself undergoing an alteration, and receiving an adjustment that might correspond with the exigency of the case, that is to say, with the differen inclination to one another under which the rays of light reached it. Rays issuing from points placed at a small distance from the eye, and which consequently must enter the eye in a spreading or diverging order, cannot, by the same optical instrument in the same state, be brought to a point, i. e. be made to form an image, in the same place with rays proceeding from objects situated at a much greater distance, and which rays arrive at the eye in directions nearly, and physically speaking, parallel. It requires a rounder lens to do it. The point of concourse behind the lens must fall critically upon the retina, or the vision is confused; yet, other things remaining the same, this point, by the immutable properties of light, is carried farther back, when the rays proceed from a near object, than when they are sent from one that is remote. A person who was using an optical instrument, would manage this matter by changing, as the occasion required, his lens or his telescope; or by adjusting the distances of his glasses with his hand or his screw: but how is it to be managed in the eye? What the alteration was, or in what part of the eye it took place, or by what means it was effected, (for, if the known laws which govern the refraction of light be maintained, some alteration in the state of the organ there must be,) had

long formed a subject of inquiry and conjecture. The change, though sufficient for the purpose, is so minute as to elude ordinary observation. Some very late discoveries, deduced from a laborious and most accurate inspection of the structure and operation of the organ, seem at length to have ascertained the mechanical alteration which the parts of the eye undergo. It is found, that by the action of certain muscles, called the straight muscles, and which action is the most advantageous that could be imagined for the purpose,—it is found, I say, that, whenever the eye is directed to a near object, three changes are produced in it at the same time, all severally contributing to the adjustment required. The cornea, or outermost coat of the eye, is rendered more round and prominent; the crystalline lens underneath is pushed forward; and the axis of vision, as the depth of the eye is called, is elongated. These changes in the eye vary its power over the rays of light in such a manner and degree as to produce exactly the effect which is wanted, viz. the formation of an image *upon the retina*, whether the rays come to the eye in a state of divergency, which is the case when the object is near to the eye, or come parallel to one another, which is the case when the object is placed at a distance. Can any thing be more decisive of contrivance than this is? The most secret laws of optics must have been known to the author of a structure endowed with such a capacity of change. It is, as though an optician, when he had a nearer object to view, should *rectify* his instrument by putting in another glass, at the same time drawing out also his tube to a different length.

"In considering vision as achieved by the means of an image formed at the bottom of the eye, we can never reflect without wonder upon the smallness, yet correctness, of the picture, the subtilty of the touch, the fineness of the lines. A landscape of five or six square leagues is brought into a space of half an inch diameter; yet the multitude of objects which it contains are all preserved; are all discriminated in their magnitudes, positions, figures, colours. The prospect from Hampstead hill is compressed into the compass of a sixpence, yet circumstantially represented. A stage coach travelling at its ordinary speed for half an hour, passes in the eye, only over one twelfth of an inch, yet is this change of place in the image distinctly perceived throughout its whole progress; for it is only by means of that perception that the motion of the coach itself is made sensible to the eye. If any thing can abate our admiration of the smallness of the visual tablet compared with the extent of vision, it is a reflection which the view of nature leads us, every hour, to make, viz. that in the hands of the Creator, great and little are nothing."

On the parts of the body which are *double*, adduced by Howe, as proofs of contrivance, our author farther remarks:—

"The human, or indeed the animal frame, considered as a mass or

assemblage, exhibits in its composition three properties, which have long struck my mind, as indubitable evidences, not only of design, but of a great deal of attention and accuracy in prosecuting the design.

"The first is, the exact correspondency of the two sides of the same animal: the right hand answering to the left, leg to leg, eye to eye, one side of the countenance to the other; and with a precision, to imitate which, in any tolerable degree, forms one of the difficulties of statuary, and requires, on the part of the artist, a constant attention to this property of his work, distinct from every other.

"It is the most difficult thing that can be, to get a wig made even, yet how seldom is the *face* awry? And what care is taken that it should not be so, the anatomy of its bones demonstrates. The upper part of the face is composed of thirteen bones, six on each side, answering each to each, and the thirteenth without a fellow, in the middle; the lower part of the face is in like manner composed of six bones, three on each side, respectively corresponding, and the lower jaw in the centre. In building an arch, could more be done in order to make the curve *true*, i. e. the parts equidistant from the middle, alike in figure and position?

"The exact resemblance of the *eyes*, considering how compounded this organ is in its structure, how various and how delicate are the shades of colour with which its iris is tinged, how differently, as to effect upon appearance, the eye may be mounted in its socket, and how differently in different heads eyes actually are set, is a property of animal bodies much to be admired. Of ten thousand eyes, I don't know that it would be possible to match one, except with its own fellow; or to distribute them into suitable pairs by any other selection than that which obtains.

"The next circumstance to be remarked is, that while the cavities of the body are so configurated, as, *externally*, to exhibit the most exact correspondency of the opposite sides, the contents of these cavities have no such correspondency. A line drawn down the middle of the breast divides the thorax into two sides exactly similar; yet these two sides inclose very different contents. The heart lies on the left side; a lobe of the lungs on the right; balancing each other, neither in size nor shape. The same thing holds of the abdomen. The liver lies on the right side, without any similar viscus opposed to it on the left. The spleen indeed is situated over against the liver; but agreeing with the liver neither in bulk nor form. There is no equipollency between these. The stomach is a vessel, both irregular in its shape, and oblique in its position. The foldings and doublings of the intestines do not present a parity of sides. Yet that symmetry which depends upon the correlation of the sides, is externally preserved throughout the whole trunk; and is the more remarkable in the lower parts of it, as the integuments are soft; and the shape, consequently, is not, as the thorax is by its ribs, reduced by natural stays. It is evident, therefore that the

external proportion does not arise from any equality in the shape or pressure of the internal contents. What is it indeed but a correction of inequalities? an adjustment, by mutual compensation, of anomalous forms into a regular congeries? the effect, in a word, of artful, and, if we might be permitted so to speak, of studied collocation?

"Similar also to this is the third observation; that an internal inequality in the feeding vessels is so managed, as to produce no inequality in parts which were intended to correspond. The right arm answers accurately to the left, both in size and shape; but the arterial branches, which supply the two arms, do not go off from their trunk, in a pair, in the same manner, at the same place, or at the same angle. Under which want of similitude, it is very difficult to conceive how the same quantity of blood should be pushed through each artery; yet the result is right; the two limbs which are nourished by them perceive no difference of supply, no effects of excess or deficiency.

"Concerning the difference of manner, in which the subclavian and carotid arteries, upon the different sides of the body, separate themselves from the aorta, Cheselden seems to have thought, that the advantage which the left gain by going off at a much acuter angle than the right, is made up to the right by their going off together in one branch. It is very possible that this may be the compensating contrivance; and if it be so, how curious, how hydrostatical!"

The construction of the *spine*, another of Howe's illustrations, is thus exemplified:—

"The *spine* or back bone is a chain of joints of very wonderful construction. Various, difficult, and almost inconsistent offices were to be executed by the same instrument. It was to be firm, yet flexible: now I know of no chain made by art, which is both these; for by firmness I mean, not only strength, but stability; *firm*, to support the erect position of the body; *flexible*, to allow of the bending of the trunk in all degrees of curvature. It was farther also, which is another, and quite a distinct purpose from the rest, to become a pipe or conduit for the safe conveyance from the brain of the most important fluid of the animal frame, that, namely, upon which all voluntary motion depends, the spinal marrow; a substance, not only of the first necessity to action, if not to life, but of a nature so delicate and tender, so susceptible, and so impatient of injury, as that any unusual pressure upon it, or any considerable obstruction of its course, is followed by paralysis or death. Now the spine was not only to furnish the main trunk for the passage of the medullary substance from the brain, but to give out, in the course of its progress, small pipes therefrom, which being afterward indefinitely subdivided, might, under the name of nerves, distribute this exquisite supply to every part of the body. The same spine was also to serve another use not less wanted than the preceding, viz. to afford a fulcrum,

stay, or basis, (or, more properly speaking, a series of these,) for the insertion of the muscles which are spread over the trunk of the body; in which trunk there are not, as in the limbs, cylindrical bones, to which they can be fastened: and, likewise, which is a similar use, to furnish a support for the ends of the ribs to rest upon.

"Bespeak of a workman a piece of mechanism which shall comprise all these purposes, and let him set about to contrive it; let him try his skill upon it; let him feel the difficulty of accomplishing the task, before he be told how the same thing is effected in the animal frame. Nothing will enable him to judge so well of the wisdom which has been employed; nothing will dispose him to think of it so truly. First, for the firmness, yet flexibility of the spine, it is composed of a great number of bones (in the human subject of twenty-four) joined to one another, and compacted together by broad bases. The breadth of the bases upon which the parts severally rest, and the closeness of the junction, give to the chain its firmness and stability; the number of parts, and consequent frequency of joints, its flexibility. Which flexibility, we may also observe, varies in different parts of the chain; is least in the back, where strength more than flexure is wanted; greater in the loins, which it was necessary should be more supple than the back; and the greatest of all in the neck, for the free motion of the head. Then, secondly, in order to afford a passage for the descent of the medullary substance, each of these bones is bored through in the middle in such a manner, as that, when put together, the hole in one bone falls into a line, and corresponds with the holes in the two bones contiguous to it. By which means, the perforated pieces, when joined, form an entire, close, uninterrupted channel; at least, while the spine is upright and at rest. But, as a settled posture is inconsistent with its use, a great difficulty still remained, which was to prevent the vertebræ shifting upon one another, so as to break the line of the canal as often as the body moves or twists; or the joints gaping externally, whenever the body is bent forward, and the spine thereupon made to take the form of a bow. These dangers, which are mechanical, are mechanically provided against. The vertebræ, by means of their processes and projections, and of the articulations which some of these form with one another at their extremities, are so locked in, and confined as to maintain in what are called the bodies, or broad surfaces of the bones, the relative position nearly unaltered; and to throw the change and the pressure produced by flexion, almost entirely upon the intervening cartilages, the springiness and yielding nature of whose substance admits of all the motion which is necessary to be performed upon them, without any chasm being produced by a separation of the parts. I say of all the motion *which* is necessary; for although we bend our backs to every degree *almost* of inclination, the motion of each vertebra is very small; such is the

advantage which we receive from the chain being composed of so many links, the spine of so many bones. Had it consisted of three or four bones only, in bending the body the spinal marrow must have been bruised at every angle. The reader need not be told that these intervening cartilages are gristles; and he may see them in perfection in a loin of veal. Their form also favours the same intention. They are thicker before than behind; so that, when we stoop forward, the compressible substance of the cartilage, yielding in its thicker and anterior part to the force which squeezes it, brings the surfaces of the adjoining vertebræ nearer to the being parallel with one another than they were before, instead of increasing the inclination of their planes, which must have occasioned a fissure, or opening between them. Thirdly, for the medullary canal giving out in its course, and in a convenient order, a supply of nerves to different parts of the body, notches are made in the upper and lower edge of every vertebra; two on each edge; equidistant on each side from the middle line of the back. When the vertebræ are put together, these notches, exactly fitting, form small holes, through which the nerves, at each articulation, issue out in pairs, in order to send their branches to every part of the body, and with an equal bounty to both sides of the body. The fourth purpose assigned to the same instrument, is the insertion of the bases of the muscles, and the support of the ends of the ribs; and for this fourth purpose, especially the former part of it, a figure, specifically suited to the design, and unnecessary for the other purposes, is given to the constituent bones. While they are plain, and round, and smooth, toward the front, where any roughness or projection might have wounded the adjacent viscera, they run out, behind, and on each side, into long processes, to which processes the muscles necessary to the motions of the trunk are fixed; and fixed with such art, that while the vertebræ supply a basis for the muscles, the muscles help to keep these bones in their position, or by their tendons to tie them together.

"That most important, however, and general property, viz. the strength of the compages, and the security against luxation, was to be still more specially consulted; for where so many joints were concerned, and where, in every one, derangement would have been fatal, it became a subject of studious precaution. For this purpose, the vertebræ are articulated, that is, the movable joints between them are formed by means of those projections of their substance, which we have mentioned under the name of processes; and these so lock in with, and overwrap one another, as to secure the body of the vertebra, not only from accidentally slipping, but even from being pushed out of its place by any violence short of that which would break the bone."

Instances of design and wonderful contrivance are as numerous as there are organized bodies in nature, and as there are relations between

bodies which are not organized. The subject is, therefore, inexhaustible The cases stated are sufficient for the illustration of this species of argument for the existence of an intelligent First Cause. Many others are given with great force and interest in the Natural Theology of Paley, from which the above quotations have been made; but his chapter on the Personality of the Deity contains applications of the argument from design, too important to be overlooked. The same course of reasoning may be traced in many other writers, but by none has it been expressed with so much clearness and felicity.

"Contrivance, if established, appears to me to prove every thing which we wish to prove. Among other things it proves the *personality* of the Deity, as distinguished from what is sometimes called nature, sometimes called a principle; which terms, in the mouths of those who use them philosophically, seem to be intended, to admit and to express an efficacy, but to exclude and to deny a personal agent. Now that which can contrive, which can design, must be a person. These capacities constitute personality, for they imply consciousness and thought. They require that which can perceive an end or purpose; as well as the power of providing means, and of directing them to their end. They require a centre in which perceptions unite, and from which volitions flow; which is mind. The acts of a mind prove the existence of a mind; and in whatever a mind resides, is a person.

"Of this we are certain, that, whatever the Deity be, neither the *universe*, nor any part of it which we see, can be he. The universe itself is merely a collective name: its parts are all which are real, or which are *things*. Now inert matter is out of the question; and organized substances include marks of contrivance. But whatever includes marks of contrivance, whatever, in its constitution, testifies design, necessarily carries us to something beyond itself, to some other being, to a designer prior to, and out of itself. No animal, for instance, can have contrived its own limbs and senses; can have been the author to itself of the design with which they were constructed. That supposition involves all the absurdity of self creation, i. e. of acting without existing. Nothing can be God which is ordered by a wisdom and a will which itself is void of; which is indebted for any of its properties to contrivance *ab extra*. The *not* having that in his nature which requires the assertion of another prior being, (which property is sometimes called self sufficiency, and sometimes self comprehension,) appertains to the Deity, as his essential distinction, and removes his nature from that of all things which we see. Which consideration contains the answer to a question that has sometimes been asked, namely, Why, since something or other must have existed from eternity, may not the present universe be that something? The contrivance perceived in it, proves that to be impossible. Nothing contrived can, in a strict and proper

sense, be eternal, forasmuch as the contriver must have existed before the contrivance.

"We have already noticed, and we must here notice again, the misapplication of the term 'law,' and the mistake concerning the idea which that term expresses in physics, whenever such idea is made to take the place of power, and still more of an intelligent power, and, as such, to be assigned for the cause of any thing, or of any property of any thing that exists. This is what we are secretly apt to do when we speak of organized bodies (plants, for instance, or animals) owing their production, their form, their growth, their qualities, their beauty, their use, to any law, or laws of nature; and when we are contented to sit down with that answer to our inquiries concerning them. I say once more, that it is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent, for it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds; it implies a power, for it is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the 'law' does nothing; is nothing.

"What has been said concerning 'law,' holds true of *mechanism*. Mechanism is not itself power. Mechanism without power can do nothing. Let a watch be contrived and constructed ever so ingeniously; be its parts ever so many, ever so complicated, ever so finely wrought, or artificially put together, it cannot *go* without a weight or spring, i. e. without a force independent of, and ulterior to its mechanism. The spring, acting at the centre, will produce different motions and different results, according to the variety of the intermediate mechanism. One and the self-same spring, acting in one and the same manner, viz. by simply expanding itself, may be the cause of a hundred different, and all useful movements, if a hundred different and well-devised sets of wheels be placed between it and the final effect, e. g. may point out the hour of the day, the day of the month, the age of the moon, the position of the planets, the cycle of the years, and many other serviceable notices; and these movements may fulfil their purposes with more or less perfection, according as the mechanism is better or worse contrived, or better or worse executed, or in a better or worse state of repair; *but in all cases, it is necessary that the spring act at the centre.* The course of our reasoning upon such a subject would be this. By inspecting the watch, even when standing still, we get a proof of contrivance, and of a contriving mind having been employed about it. In the form and obvious relation of its parts, we see enough to convince us of this. If we pull the works in pieces, for the purpose of a closer examination, we are still more fully convinced. But when we see the watch *going*, we see proof of another point, viz. that there is a power somewhere, and somehow or other applied to it: a power in

action; that there is more in the subject than the mere wheels of the machine; that there is a secret spring, or a gravitating plummet; in a word, that there is force and energy, as well as mechanism.

"So, then, the watch in motion establishes to the observer two conclusions: one, that thought, contrivance, and design have been employed in the forming, proportioning, and arranging of its parts; and that whoever or wherever he be, or were, such a contriver there is, or was: the other, that force or power, distinct from mechanism, is, at this present time, acting upon it. If I saw a hand mill even at rest, I should see contrivance; but if I saw it grinding, I should be assured that a hand was at the windlass, though in another room. It is the same in nature. In the works of nature we trace mechanism; and this alone proves contrivance; but living, active, moving, productive nature, proves also the exertion of a power at the centre; for wherever the power resides, may be denominated the centre.

"The intervention and disposition of what are called '*second causes*' fall under the same observation. This disposition is or is not mechanism, according as we can or cannot trace it by our senses, and means of examination. That is all the difference there is; and it is a difference which respects our faculties, not the things themselves. Now where the order of second causes is mechanical, what is here said of mechanism strictly applies to it. But it would be always mechanism (natural chemistry, for instance, would be mechanism) if our senses were acute enough to descry it. Neither mechanism, therefore, in the works of nature, nor the intervention of what are called second causes, (for I think that they are the same thing,) excuses the necessity of an agent distinct from both.

"If, in tracing these causes, it be said, that we find certain general properties of matter, which have nothing in them that bespeaks intelligence, I answer that, still, the *managing* of these properties, the pointing and directing them to the uses which we see made of them, demands intelligence in the highest degree. For example, suppose animal secretions to be elective attractions, and that such and such attractions universally belong to such and such substances; in all which there is no intellect concerned; still the choice and collocation of these substances, the fixing upon right substances, and disposing them in right places, must be an act of intelligence. What mischief would follow, were there a single transposition of the secretory organs; a single mistake in arranging the glands which compose them!

"There may be many second causes, and many courses of second causes, one behind another, between what we observe of nature and the Deity, but there must be intelligence somewhere: there must be more in nature than what we see; and among the things unseen, there must be an intelligent, designing author. The philosopher beholds with astonishment the production of things around him. Unconscious particles

of matter take their stations, and severally range themselves in an order, so as to become collectively plants or animals, i. e. organized bodies, with parts bearing strict and evident relation to one another, and to the utility of the whole: and it should seem that these particles could not move in any other way than as they do; for they testify not the smallest sign of choice, or liberty, or discretion. There may be particular intelligent beings guiding these motions in each case; or they may be the result of trains of mechanical dispositions, fixed beforehand by an intelligent appointment, and kept in action by a power at the centre. But in either case there must be intelligence."

The above arguments, as they irresistibly confirm the Scripture doctrine of the existence of an intelligent First Cause, expose the extreme folly and absurdity of Atheism. The first of the leading theories which it has assumed, is *the eternity of matter*. When this means the eternity of the world in its present form and constitution, it is contradicted by the changes which are actually and every moment taking place in it; and, as above argued, by the contrivance which it every where presents, and which, it has been proved, necessarily supposes that designing intelligence we call God. When it means the eternity of unorganized matter only, the *subject* which has received those various forms, and orderly arrangements, which imply contrivance and final causes, it leaves untouched the question of an intelligent cause, the author of the forms with which it has been impressed. A creative cause may, and must, nevertheless exist; and this was the opinion of many of the ancient Theistical philosophers, who ascribed eternity both to God and to matter; and considered creation, not as the bringing of something out of nothing, but as the framing of what actually existed without order and without end. But though this tenet was held, in conjunction with a belief in the Deity, by many who had not the light of the Scripture revelation; yet its manifest tendency is to Atheism, because it supposes the impossibility of creation in the absolute sense; and thus produces limited notions of God, from which the transition to an entire denial of him is an easy step. In modern times, therefore, the opinion of the eternity of matter has been held by few but absolute Atheists.

What seems to have led to the notion of a pre-existent and eternal matter out of which the world was formed, was the supposed impossibility of a creation from nothing, according to the maxim, "*ex nihilo nihil fit.*" The philosophy was however bad, because as no contradiction was implied in thus ascribing to God the power to create out of nothing; it was a matter of choice, whether to allow what was merely not comprehensible by man, or to put limitations without reason to the power of God. Thus Cudworth:—

"Because it is undeniably certain, concerning ourselves, and all imperfect beings, that none of these can create any *new substance*, men are

apt to measure all things by their own scantling, and to suppose it universally impossible for any power whatever thus to create. But since it is certain, that imperfect beings can themselves produce *some things* out of nothing pre-existing, as *new cogitations*, *new local motion*, and *new modifications* of things corporeal, it is surely reasonable to think that an absolutely perfect being can do something more, *i. e.* create *new substances*, or give them their whole being. And it may well be thought as easy for God or an omnipotent Being to make a whole world, matter and all, ἐξ ουκ ὀντων, as it is for us to create *a thought* or to move a finger, or for the sun to send out rays, or a candle light, or lastly, for an opaque body to produce an image of itself in a glass or water, or to project a shadow: all these imperfect things being but the *energies*, *rays*, *images*, or *shadows* of the Deity. For a substance to be made out of nothing by God, or a Being infinitely perfect, is not for it to be made out of nothing in the impossible sense, because it comes from him who is *all*. Nor can it be said to be impossible for any thing whatever to be made by that which hath not only *infinitely greater perfection*, but also *infinite active power*. It is indeed true, that infinite power itself cannot do things in their own nature impossible; and, therefore, those who deny creation ought to prove that it is absolutely impossible for a substance, though not for an accident or modification, to be brought from non-existence into being. But nothing is in itself impossible, which does not imply a contradiction: and though it be a contradiction for a thing to be and not to be at the same time, there is surely no contradiction in conceiving an imperfect being, which before was not, afterward to be."

It is not necessary to refer to the usual metaphysical arguments to show the non-eternity of matter, by proving that its existence must be necessary if it be eternal; and, if necessary, that it must be infinite, &c. They are not of much value. Every man bears in himself the proof of a creation out of nothing, so that the objection from the impossibility of the thing is at once removed.

"That sensation, intelligence, consciousness, and volition, are not the result of any modifications of figure and motion, is a truth as evident as that consciousness is not swift, nor volition square. If then these be the powers or properties of a being distinct from matter, which we think capable of the completest proof, every man who does not believe that his mind has existed and been conscious from eternity, must be convinced that the power of creation has been exerted on himself. If it be denied that there is any immaterial substance in man, still it must be confessed that, as matter is not essentially conscious, and cannot be made so by any particular organization, there is some real thing or entity call it what you please, which has either existed and been conscious from eternity, or been in time brought from non-entity into existence by an exertion of infinite power."

The former no sober person will contend for, and the latter therefore must be admitted.

On these grounds the absurdity of Atheism is manifest. If it attributes the various arrangements of material things to chance, that is, to nothing, it rests in *design* without a *designer;* in *effects* without a *cause*. It will allow an intelligent cause operating to produce these effects, but denies him to be almighty, by ascribing eternity to matter, and placing its creation beyond his power, it acknowledges with us indeed a *God;* but makes him an imperfect being, limited in his power; and it chooses to acknowledge this limited and imperfect being not only without reason, for we have just seen that creation out of nothing implies no contradiction, but even *against reason*, for the acknowledgment of a creation out of nothing must be forced from him by his own experience, unless he will contend that that conscious being *himself* may have existed from eternity without being conscious of existence, except for the space of a few past years.

On some modern schemes of Atheism, Paley justly remarks:—

"I much doubt, whether the new schemes have advanced any thing upon the old, or done more than changed the terms of the nomenclature. For instance, I could never see the difference between the antiquated system of atoms and Buffon's organic molecules. This philosopher, having made a planet by knocking off from the sun a piece of melted glass, in consequence of the stroke of a comet; and having set it in motion by the same stroke, both round its own axis and the sun, finds his next difficulty to be, how to bring plants and animals upon it. In order to solve this difficulty, we are to suppose the universe replenished with particles endowed with life, but without organization or senses of their own; and endowed also with a tendency to marshal themselves into organized forms. The concourse of these particles, by virtue of this tendency, but without intelligence, will, or direction, (for I do not find that any of these qualities are ascribed to them,) has produced the living forms which we now see.

"Very few of the conjectures, which philosophers hazard upon these subjects, have more of pretension in them, than the challenging you to show the direct impossibility of the hypothesis. In the present example there seemed to be a positive objection to the whole scheme upon the very face of it; which was that, if the case were as here represented, new combinations ought to be perpetually taking place; new plants and animals, or organized bodies which were neither, ought to be starting up before our eyes every day. For this, however, our philosopher has an answer. While so many forms of plants and animals are already in existence, and consequently, so many 'internal moulds,' as he calls them, are prepared and at hand, the organic particles run into these moulds, and are employed in supplying an accession of substance to them, as well for their growth, as for their propagation,—by

which means things keep their ancient course. But, says the same philosopher, should any general loss or destruction of the present constitution of organized bodies take place, the particles for want of 'moulds' into which they might enter, would run into different combinations, and replenish the waste with new species of organized substances.

"Is there any history to countenance this notion? Is it known, that any destruction has been so repaired? Any desert thus re-peopled?

"But, these wonder-working instruments, these 'internal moulds,' what are they after all? What, when examined, but a name without signification? unintelligible, if not self contradictory; at the best differing in nothing from the 'essential forms' of the Greek philosophy? One short sentence of Buffon's works exhibits his scheme as follows:—'When this nutritious and prolific matter, which is diffused throughout all nature, passes through the *internal mould* of an animal or vegetable, and finds a proper matrix or receptacle, it gives rise to an animal or vegetable of the same species.' Does any reader annex a meaning to the expression 'internal mould,' in this sentence? Ought it then to be said, that though we have little notion of an internal mould, we have not much more of a designing mind? The very contrary of this assertion is the truth. When we speak of an artificer or an architect, we talk of what is comprehensible to our understanding, and familiar to our experience. We use no other terms, than what refer us for their meaning to our consciousness and observation; what express the constant objects of both; whereas names like that we have mentioned, refer us to nothing; excite no idea; convey a sound to the ear, but I think do no more.

"Another system, which has lately been brought forward, and with much ingenuity, is that of *appetencies*. The principle, and the short account of the theory, is this: pieces of soft, ductile matter, being endued with propensities or appetencies for particular actions, would, by continual endeavours, carried on through a long series of generations, work themselves gradually into suitable forms; and at length acquire, though perhaps by obscure and almost imperceptible improvements, an organization fitted to the action which their respective propensities led them to exert. A piece of animated matter for example, that was endued with a propensity to *fly*, though ever so shapeless, though no other we will suppose than a round ball, to begin with, would, in a course of ages, if not in a million of years, perhaps in a hundred million of years, (for our theorists, having eternity to dispose of, are never sparing in time,) acquire *wings*. The same tendency to locomotion in an aquatic animal, or rather in an animated lump which might happen to be surrounded by water, would end in the production of *fins*: in a *living* substance, confined to the solid earth, would put out *legs* and *feet*; or if

it took a different turn, would break the body into ringlets, and conclude by *crawling* upon the ground.

"The scheme under consideration is open to the same objection with other conjectures of a similar tendency, *viz.* a total defect of evidence. No changes, like those which the theory requires, have ever been observed. All the changes in Ovid's Metamorphoses might have been effected by these appetencies, if the theory were true: yet not an example, nor the pretence of an example, is offered of a single change being known to have taken place.

"The solution, when applied to the works of nature *generally*, is contradicted by many of the phenomena, and totally inadequate to others. The *ligaments* or strictures, by which the tendons are tied down at the angles of the joints, could by no possibility be formed by the motion or exercise of the tendons themselves; by any appetency exciting these parts into action: or by any tendency arising therefrom. The tendency is all the other way; the *conatus* in constant opposition to them. Length of time does not help the case at all, but the reverse. The *valves* also in the blood vessels could never be formed in the manner which our theorist proposes. The blood, in its right and natural course, has no tendency to form them. When obstructed or refluent, it has the contrary. These parts could not grow out of their use, though they had eternity to grow in.

"The *senses* of animals appear to me altogether incapable of receiving the explanation of their origin which this theory affords. Including under the word 'sense' the organ and the perception, we have no account of either. How will our philosopher get at *vision*, or make an eye? How should the blind animal affect sight, of which blind animals, we know, have neither conception nor desire? Affecting it, by what operation of its will, by what endeavour to see, could it so determine the fluids of its body, as to inchoate the formation of an eye? Or suppose the eye formed, would the perception follow? The same of the other senses. And this objection holds its force, ascribe what you will to the hand of time, to the power of habit, to changes too slow to be observed by man, or brought within any comparison which he is able to make of past things with the present: concede what you please to these arbitrary and unattested suppositions, how will they help you? Here is no inception. No laws, no course, no powers of nature which prevail at present, nor any analogous to these, could give commencement to a new sense. And it is in vain to inquire, how that might proceed which could never *begin*.

"In the last place: what do these appetencies mean when applied to plants? I am not able to give a signification to the term, which can be transferred from animals to plants; or which is common to both. Yet a no less successful organization is found in plants, than

what obtains in animals. A solution is wanted for one as well as the other.

"Upon the whole; after all the schemes and struggles of a reluctant philosophy, the necessary resort is a Deity. The marks of *design* are too strong to be got over. Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is GOD."

Well has it been said, that Atheism is, in all its theories, a *credulity* of the grossest kind, equally degrading to the understanding and to the heart: for what reflecting and honest mind can for a moment put these theories into competition with that revealed in the Scriptures, at once so sublime and so convincing; and which instead of shunning, like those just mentioned, an appeal to facts, bids us look to the heavens and to the earth; assemble the aggregate of beings, great and small; and examine their structure, and mark their relations, in proof that there must exist an all-wise and an almighty Creator?

Such is the evidence which the doctrine of a Deity receives from experience, observation, and rational induction, *à posteriori*. The argument thus stated, has an overwhelming force, and certainly needs no other, though attempts have been made to obtain proof *à priori*, and thus to meet and rout the forces of the enemy in both directions. No instance is however I believe on record of an Atheistic conversion having been produced by this process, and it may be ranked among the over zealous attempts of the advocates of truth. It is well intentioned, but unsatisfactory, and so far as on the one hand it has led to a neglect of the more convincing, and powerful course of argument drawn from "*the things which do appear*;" and on the other, has encouraged a dependence upon a mode of investigation, to which the human mind is inadequate, which in many instances is an utter mental delusion, and which scarcely two minds will conduct in the same manner; it has probably been mischievous in its effects by inducing a skepticism not arising out of the nature of the case, but from the imperfect and unsatisfactory investigations of the human understanding, pushed beyond the limit of its powers. In most instances it is a sword which cuts two ways; and the mere imaginary assumptions of those who think they have found out a new way to demonstrate truth, have in many instances either done disservice to it by absurdity, or yielded principles which unbelievers have connected with the most injurious conclusions. We need only instance the doctrine of the *necessary* existence of the Deity, when reasoned *à priori*. Some acute infidels have thanked those for the discovery who intended nothing so little as to encourage error; and have argued from that notion, that the Supreme Being cannot be a free agent, and have thus set the first principles of religion at variance with the Scriptures. The fact seems to be, that though, when once the existence of a first and intelligent cause is established, some of his *attributes* are

capable of proof *à priori*, (how much that proof is worth is another question,) yet that his *existence* itself admits of no such demonstration, and that in the nature of the thing it is impossible.

The reason of this is drawn from the very nature of an argument *à priori*. It is an argument from an antecedent to a consequent, from cause to effect. If therefore there be any thing existing in nature, or could have been, from which the being and attributes of God might have been derived, or any thing which can be justly considered as *prior* in orde of nature or conception to the first cause of all things; then may the argument from such *prior* thing or principle be good and valid.—But if there is in reality nothing *prior* to the being of God, considered as the first cause and causality, nothing in *nature*, nothing in *reason*, then the attempt is fruitless to argue from it; and we improperly pretend to search into the grounds or reasons of the first cause, of whom antecedently we neither do nor can know any thing.

As the force of the argument *à priori* has however been much debated, it may not be useless to enter somewhat more fully into the subject.

One of the earliest and ablest advocates of this mode of demonstrating the existence of God, was Dr. Samuel Clarke. He however first proceeds *à posteriori* to prove, from the actual existence of dependent beings, the existence from eternity of "one unchangeable and independent Being;" and thus makes himself debtor to this obvious and plain demonstration before he can prove that this Being is, in his sense, *necessarily* existent. Necessity of existence is therefore tacitly acknowledged, not to be a tangible idea in the first instance; and the weight of the proof is tacitly confessed to rest upon the argument from *effect* to *cause*, which if admitted needs no assistance from a more abstract course of arguing. For if the first argument be allowed, every thing else follows; and it must be allowed, before the higher ground of demonstration can be taken. We have seen the guarded manner in which Howe, in the quotation before given, has stated the notion of the necessary existence of the Divine Being. Dr. S. Clarke and his followers have refined upon this, and given a view of the subject which is liable to the strongest objections. His words are, "To be self existent is to exist by an absolute necessity, originally in the nature of the thing itself;" and "this necessity must not be barely consequent upon our supposition of the existence of such a being, for then it would not be a necessity absolutely such in itself, nor be the *ground* or *foundation* of the existence of any thing, being on the contrary only a consequent of it; but it must *antecedently* force itself upon us whether we will or not; even when we are endeavouring to suppose that no such being exists." (*Demonstration* 1.)

One of the reasons given for this opinion is, "there must be in nature

a permanent *ground* or *reason* for the existence of the first cause, otherwise its being would be owing to mere chance." But to this it has been well replied, "Why must we say that God has his existence from, or that he does exist for some prior cause or reason? Why may we not say that God exists as the first cause of all things, and thereupon surcease from all farther inquiries? God himself said 'I *am*,' and he had done. But the argument, if it did prove any thing, would prove too much. To evince which, let the same way of reasoning be applied to what you call the *ground* or the reason of the existence of the first cause, and then with very little variation, I retort upon you in your own words. If this ground or reason be itself any thing, or any property of any thing, of what nature, kind or degree soever, there must according to your way of reasoning, be in nature a ground or reason of the existence of such your antecedent necessity, 'a reason why it is, rather than why it is not, otherwise its existence will be owing to, or dependent on, mere chance.' You observe elsewhere that 'nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that any thing, or any circumstance of any thing, is, and yet that there is absolutely no reason why it is, rather than why it is not.' This consideration you allege as a vindication of your assigning a reason, *à priori*, for the existence of the first cause. If therefore your supposed reason, ground, or necessity, be 'any thing or any supposable circumstance of any thing,' as surely it must be, if not mere nothing, then by the same rule, such 'ground,' 'necessity,' &c, must have a reason, *à priori*, why it is, rather than why it is not, and after that another, and then a third, and so on *in infinitum*. And thus in your way we may be always seeking a first cause, and never be able to find one, whereon to fix ourselves, or check our restless and unprofitable inquiries. While indeed we consider only inferior existencies and second causes, there will always be room left for inquiring why such things are, and how such things came to be as they are; because this is only seeking and investigating the initial, the efficient, or the final cause of their existence. But when we are advanced beyond all causes procatarctical and final, it remains only to say, that such is our first cause and causality, that we know it exists, and without prior cause; and with this you yourself will be obliged to fall in, the first step you farther take; for if we ask you of the *antecedent necessity*, whence it is, and what prior ground there was for it, you must yourself be content to say—as it is, you know not why, you know not how." (*Gretton's Review of the Argument à priori.*)

The necessary existence of the first cause, considered as a *logical necessity*, may be made out without difficulty, and is indeed demonstrated in the arguments given above; but the *natural necessity* of his existence is a subject too subtle for human grasp, and, from its obscurity, is calculated to mislead. Every thing important in the idea, so far as it is

unexceptionable, is well and safely expressed by Baxter. "That which could be eternally without a cause, and itself cause all things, is self sufficient and independent." (*Reasons of the Christian Religion.*) This seems the only true notion of *necessary* existence, and care should be taken to use the term in a definite and comprehensible sense. The word *necessity* when applied to existence may be taken in two acceptations, either as it arises from the relation which the existence of that of which it is affirmed has to the existence of other things, or from the relation which the actual existence of that thing has to the manner of its own existence. In the former sense, it denotes that the supposition of the non-existence of that of which the necessity is affirmed, implies the non-existence of things we know to exist. Thus some independent being does necessarily exist; because to suppose no *independent* being, implies that there are no *dependent* beings, the contrary of which we know to be true. In the second sense, necessity means that the being of which it is affirmed exists after such a manner as that it never could in time past have been non-existent, or can in future time cease to be. Thus every *independent* being, as it exists without a cause, is necessarily existing, because existence is essential to such a being; so that it never could begin to exist, and never can cease to be: for to suppose a being to begin to exist, or to lose its existence, is to suppose a change from non-entity to entity, or *vice versâ;* and to suppose such a change is to suppose a cause upon which that being depends. Every being therefore which is *independent*, that is, which had no cause of its existence, must *exist necessarily*, and cannot possibly have begun to exist in time past, or cease to be in time future.

Still farther on Dr. S. Clarke's view of the necessary existence of the Supreme Being, it has been observed,

"But what is this *necessity* which proves so much? It is the ground of existence (he says) of that which exists of itself; and if so, it must, in the order of nature, and in our conceptions, be antecedent to that being of whose existence it is the ground. Concerning such a principle, there are but three suppositions which can possibly be made; and all of them may be shown to be absurd and contradictory. We may suppose either the substance itself, some property of that substance, or something extrinsic to both, to be this antecedent ground of existence prior in the order of nature to the first cause.

"One would think, from the turn of the argument which here represents this antecedent necessity as efficient and causal, that it were considered as something extrinsic to the first cause. Indeed, if the words have any meaning in them at all, or any force of argument, they must be so understood, just as we understand them of any external cause producing its effect. But as an extrinsic principle is absurd in itself, and is beside rejected by Dr. S. Clarke, who says expressly, that

of the thing which derives not its being from any other thing, this necessity or ground of existence must be in the thing itself,' we need not say a word more of the last of these suppositions.

"Let us then consider the first; let us take the substance itself, and try whether it can be conceived as *prior* or *antecedent* to itself in our conceptions or in the order of nature. Surely we need not observe that nothing can be more absurd or contradictory than such a supposition. Dr. S. Clarke himself repeatedly affirms, and it would be strange indeed if he did not affirm, that no *being*, no *thing* whatever, can be conceived as in any respect prior to the first cause.

"The only remaining supposition is, that some attribute or property of the self-existent being may be conceived as in the order of nature antecedent to that being. But this, if possible, is more absurd than either of the two preceding suppositions. An attribute is attributed to its subject as its ground or support, and not the subject to its attribute. A property, in the very notion of it, is proper to the substance to which it belongs, and subsequent to it both in our conceptions and in the order of nature. An antecedent attribute, or antecedent property, is a solecism as great, and a contradiction as flat, as an antecedent subsequent or a subsequent antecedent, understood in the same sense and in the same syllogism. Every property or attribute, as such, presupposes its subject; and cannot otherwise be understood. This is a truth so obvious and so forcible, that it sometimes extorts the assent even of those who upon other occasions labour to obscure it. It is confessed by Dr. S. Clarke, that 'the scholastic way of proving the existence of the self-existent being from the absolute perfection of his nature, is ὑστερον πρωτερον. For all or any perfections (says he) presuppose existence; which is a *petitio principii*.' If therefore properties, modes, or attributes in God, be considered as perfections, (and it is impossible to consider them as any thing else,) then, by this confession of the great Author himself, they must all or any of them presuppose existence. It is indeed immediately added in the same place, 'that bare necessity of existence does not presuppose, but infer existence;' which is true only if such necessity be supposed to be a principle extrinsic, the absurdity of which has been already shown, and is indeed universally confessed. If it be a mode or property, it must presuppose the existence of its subject, as certainly and as evidently as it is a mode or a property. It might perhaps *à posteriori* infer the existence of its subject, as effects may infer a cause; but that it should infer in the other way *à priori* is altogether as impossible as that a triangle should be a square, or a globe a parallelogram." (*Law's Inquiry.*)

The true idea of the necessary existence of God is, that he thus exists because it is his nature, as an independent and uncaused being, *to be*, his being is *necessary* because it is underived, not *underived* because it

is necessary. The first is the sober sense of the word among our old divines; the latter is a theory of modern date, and leads to no practical result whatever, except to entangle the mind in difficulty, and to give a colour to some very injurious errors.

Equally unsatisfactory, and therefore quite as little calculated to serve the cause of truth, is the argument from *space;* which is represented by Newton, Clarke, and others, as an *infinite mode* of an *infinite substance*, and that *substance God*, so that from the existence of space itself may be argued the existence of one supreme and infinite Being. Berkeley, Law, and others, have however shown the fallacy of considering space either as a *substance*, or a *mode*, and have brought these speculations under the dominion of common sense, and rescued them from metaphysical delusion. They have rightly observed, that space is a mere *negation*, and that to suppose it to have existence, because it has some properties, for instance, of penetrability, or the capacity of receiving body, is the same thing as to affirm that *darkness* must be something because it has the capacity of receiving *light*, and *silence* something because it has the property of admitting *sound*, and *absence* the property of being supplied by *presence*. To reason in this manner is to assign absolute negations, and such as, in the same way, may be applied to *nothing*, and then call them positive properties, and so infer that the chimera, thus clothed with them, must needs be *something*. The arguments in favour of the real existence of space as something positive, have failed in the hands of their first great authors, and the attempts since made to uphold them have added nothing but what is exceedingly futile, and indeed often obviously absurd. The whole of this controversy has left us only to lament the waste of labour which has been employed in erecting around the impregnable ramparts of the great arguments on which the cause rests with so much safety, the useless incumbrances of mud and straw.

The proof of the *being* of a God reposes wholly then upon arguments *à posteriori*, and it needs no other; though we shall see as we proceed that even these arguments, strong and irrefutable as they are when rightly applied, have been used to prove more as to some of the *attributes* of God, than can satisfactorily be drawn from them. Even with this safe and convincing process of reasoning at our command, we shall find, at every step of an inquiry into the Divine nature, our entire dependence upon Divine revelation, for our *primary* light. That must both originate our investigations, and conduct them to a satisfactory result.

CHAPTER II.

Attributes *of God:* (5) *Unity, Spirituality.*

The existence of a supreme Creator and First Cause of all things, himself uncaused, and independent, and therefore self existent, having been proved, the next question is, whether there exists more than one such Being, or, in other words, whether we are to ascribe to him an absolute *unity* or *soleness*. On this point the testimony of the Scriptures is express, and unequivocal. "The Lord our God is one Lord," Deut. vi, 4. "The Lord he is God; there is none else beside him," Deut. iv, 35. "Thou art God alone," Psalm lxxxvi, 10. "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one." Nor is this stated in Scripture, merely to exclude all other creators, governors, and deities, in connection with men, and the system of created things which we behold; but *absolutely*, so as to exclude the idea of the existence, any where, of more than one Divine nature.

Of this unity, the proper Scripture notion may be thus expressed. Some things are one by virtue of composition, but God hath no parts, nor is compounded; but is a pure simple Being. Some are one in kind, but admit many individuals of the same kind, as men, angels, and other creatures; but God is so one that there are no other gods, though there are other beings. Some things are so one, as that there exists no other of the same kind, as are one sun, one moon, one world, one heaven; yet there might have been more, if it had pleased God so to will it. But God is so one, that there is not, there *cannot be*, another God. He is one only, and takes up the Deity so fully, as to admit no fellow. (Lawson's *Theo-Politica.*)

The proof of this important doctrine from Scripture is short and simple. We have undoubted proofs of a revelation from the Maker and Governor of this present world. Granting him to be wise and good, "it is impossible that God should lie," and his own testimony assigns to him an exclusive Deity. If we admit the authority of the Scriptures, we admit a Deity; if we admit one God, we exclude all others. The truth of Scripture, resting as we have seen on proofs which cannot be resisted without universal skepticism, and universal skepticism being

(5) "They are called *attributes*, because God attributes them to and affirms them of himself. *Properties*, because we conceive them *proper* to God, and such as can be predicated only of him, so that by them we distinguish him from all other beings. *Perfections*, because they are the several representations of that one perfection which is himself. *Names* and *Terms*, because they express and signify something of his *essence*. *Notions*, because they are so many apprehensions of his being as we conceive of him in our minds." (Lawson's *Theo. Politica.*

proved to be impossible by the common conduct of even the most skeptical men, the proof of the Divine unity rests precisely on the same basis, and is sustained by the same certain evidence.

On this as on the former point however there is much *rational* confirmation, to which revelation has given us the key; though without that, and even in its strongest form, it may be concluded from the prevalence of polytheism among the generality of nations, and of dualism among others, that the human mind would have had but too indistinct a view of this kind of evidence to rest in a conclusion so necessary to true religion and to settled rules of morals.

To prove the unity of God several arguments *à priori* have been made use of; to which mode of proof, provided the argument itself be logical, no objection lies. For though it appears absurd to attempt to prove *à priori* the existence of a first cause, seeing that nothing can either in order of time or order of nature be *prior* to him, or be conceived prior to him; yet the existence of an independent and self-existent cause of all things being made known to us by revelation, and confirmed by the phenomena of actual and dependent existence, a ground is laid for considering, from this fact, which is antecedent in order of nature, though not in order of time, the consequent attributes with which such a Being must be invested.

Among the arguments of this class to prove the Divine unity, the following are the principal:—

Dr. S. Clarke argues from his view of the necessary existence of the Divine Being:—"Necessity," he observes, "absolute in itself, is simple and uniform, and universal, without any possible difference, difformity, or variety whatsoever; and all variety or difference of existence must needs arise from some external cause, and be dependent upon it." And again: "To suppose two or more *distinct* beings existing of themselves necessarily, and independent of each other, implies this contradiction, that each of them being independent of each other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist, and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing." (*Demonstration*, Prop. 7.) These arguments being however wholly founded upon that peculiar notion of necessary existence, which is advocated by the author, derive their whole authority from the principle itself, to which some objections have been offered.

The argument from *space* must share the same fate. If space be an infinite attribute of an infinite substance, and an *essential* attribute of Deity, then the existence of one infinite substance, and one only, may probably be argued from the existence of this infinite property; but if space be a mere negation, and neither substance nor attribute, which has been sufficiently proved by the writers before referred to, then it is worth nothing as a proof of the unity of God.

Wollaston argues, that if two or more independent beings exist, their natures must be the same or different; if different, either contrary or various. If contrary, each must destroy the operations of the other; if various, one must have what the other wants, and both cannot be perfect. If their nature be perfectly the same, then they would coincide, and indeed be but one, though called two. (*Religion of Nature.*)

Bishop Wilkins says, if God be an infinitely perfect being, it is impossible to imagine two such beings at the same time, because they must have several perfections, or the same. If the former, neither of them can be God, because neither of them has all possible perfections. If they have both equal perfections, neither of them can be absolutely perfect, because it is not so great to have the same equal perfections in common with another, as to be superior to all others. (*Principles of Natural Religion.*)

"The nature of God," says Bishop Pearson, "consists in this, that he is the prime and original cause of all things, as an independent being, upon whom all things else depend, and likewise the ultimate end or final cause of all; but in this sense, two prime causes are unimaginable, and for all things to depend on one, and yet for there to be more independent beings than one, is a clear contradiction." (*Exposition of the Creed.*)

The best argument of this kind is however that which arises from *absolute perfection*, the idea of which forces itself upon our minds, when we reflect upon the nature of a self-existent and independent Being. Such a being there is, as is sufficiently proved from the existence of beings dependent and derived; and it is impossible to admit that without concluding, that he who is independent and underived, who subsists wholly and only of himself without depending on any other, must owe this absoluteness to so peculiar an excellency of its own nature as we cannot well conceive to be less than that by which it comprehends in itself the most boundless and unlimited fulness of being, life, power, or whatsoever can be conceived under the name of a perfection. "To such a being infinity may be justly ascribed; and infinity, not extrinsically considered with respect to time and place, but intrinsically, as imparting bottomless profundity of essence, and the full confluence of all kinds and degrees of perfection without bound or limit." (Howe's *Living Temple.*) "Limitation is the effect of some superior cause, which, in the present instance, there cannot be: consequently, to suppose limits where there can be no limiter, is to suppose an effect without a cause. For a being to be limited or deficient in any respect, *is to* be dependent in that respect on some other being which gave it *just* so much and no more; consequently that being which in no respect depends upon any other, is in no respect limited or deficient. In all beings capable of increase or diminution, and consequently incapable

perfection or absolute infinity, limitation or defect is indeed a necessary consequence of existence, and is only a negation of that perfection which is wholly incompatible with their nature; and therefore in these beings it requires no farther cause. But in a being naturally capable of perfection or absolute infinity, all imperfection or finiteness, as it cannot flow from the nature of that being, seems to require some ground or reason; which reason, as it is foreign from the being itself, must be the effect of some other external cause, and consequently cannot have place in the first cause. That the self-existent being is capable of perfection or absolute infinity must be granted, because he is manifestly the subject of one infinite or perfect attribute, namely, eternity or absolute invariable existence. In this respect his existence is perfect, and therefore it may be perfect in every other respect also. Now that which is the subject of one infinite attribute or perfection, must have all its attributes infinitely or in perfection; since to have any perfections in a finite limited manner, when the subject and these perfections are both capable of strict infinity, would be the fore-mentioned absurdity of positive limitation without a cause. To suppose this eternal and independent Being limited in or by its own nature, is to suppose some antecedent nature or limiting quality superior to that being, to the existence of which no thing, no quality, is in any respect antecedent or superior. The same method of reasoning will prove knowledge and every other perfection to be infinite in the Deity, when once we have proved that perfection to belong to him at all; at least it will show, that to suppose it limited is unreasonable, since we can find no manner of ground for limitation in any respect; and this is as far as we need go, or perhaps as natural light will lead us." (Dr. GLEIG.)

The connection between the steps of the argument from the self-existence and infinity of the Deity to his unity, may be thus traced. There is actually existing an absolute, entire fulness of wisdom, power, and of all other perfection. This absolute entire fulness of perfection is infinite. This infinite perfection must have its seat somewhere. Its primary original seat can be nowhere but in necessary self-subsisting being. If then we suppose a plurality of self-originate beings concurring to make up the seat or subject of this infinite perfection, each one must either be of finite and partial perfection, or infinite and absolute. Infinite and absolute it cannot be, because one self-originate, infinitely and absolutely perfect being, will necessarily comprehend all perfection, and leave nothing to the rest. Nor finite, because many finites can never make one infinite; nor many broken parcels or fragments of perfection ever make infinite and absolute perfection, even though their number, if that were possible, were infinite.

To these arguments from the Divine *nature*, proofs of his unity are to be drawn from his *works*. While we have no revelation of or from any

other being than from him whom we worship as GOD; so the frame and constitution of nature present us with a *harmony* and order which show, that their Creator and Preserver is but one. We see but one *will* and one *intelligence*, and therefore there is but one Being. The light of this truth must have been greatly obscured to heathens, who knew not how to account for the admixture of good and evil which are in the world, and many of them therefore supposed both a good and an evil deity. To us, however, who know how to account for this fact from the relation in which man stands to the moral government of an offended Deity, and the connection of this present state with another; and that it is to man a state of correction and discipline; not only is this difficulty removed, but additional proof is afforded, that the Creator and the Ruler of the world is but one Being. If two independent beings of equal power concurred to make the world, the good and the evil would be equal; but the good predominates.—Between the good and the evil there could also be no harmony or connection; but we plainly see evil subjected to the purposes of benevolence, and so to accord with it, which at once removes the objection.

"Of the unity of the Deity," says Paley, "the proof is the uniformity of plan observable in the universe. The universe itself is a system; each part either depending upon other parts, or being connected with other parts by some common law of motion, or by the presence of some common substance. One principle of gravitation causes a stone to drop toward the earth, and the moon to wheel round it. One law of attraction carries all the different planets about the sun. This, philosophers demonstrate. There are also other points of agreement among them, which may be considered as marks of the identity of their origin, and of their intelligent author. In all are found the conveniency and stability derived from gravitation. They all experience vicissitudes of days and nights, and changes of season. They all, at least Jupiter, Mars, and Venus, have the same advantages from their atmospheres as we have. In all the planets, the axes of rotation are permanent. Nothing is more probable than that the same attracting influence, acting according to the same rule, reaches to the fixed stars; but if this be only probable, another thing is certain, namely, that the same element of light does. The light from a fixed star affects our eyes in the same manner, is refracted and reflected according to the same laws, as the light of a candle. The velocity of the light of the fixed stars is also the same, as the velocity of the light of the sun, reflected from the satellites of Jupiter. The heat of the sun, in kind, differs nothing from the heat of a coal fire.

"In our own globe the case is clearer. New countries are continually discovered, but the old laws of nature are always found in them; new plants, perhaps, or animals, but always in company with plants and animals which we already know; and always possessing many of the

same general properties. We never get among such original or totally different modes of existence, as to indicate that we are come into the province of a different Creator, or under the direction of a different will. In truth, the same order of things attends us wherever we go. The elements act upon one another, electricity operates, the tides rise and fall, the magnetic needle elects its position in one region of the earth and sea as well as in another. One atmosphere invests all parts of the globe and connects all; one sun illuminates; one moon exerts its specific attraction upon all parts. If there be a variety in natural effects, as, for example, in the tides of different seas, that very variety is the result of the same cause, acting under different circumstances. In many cases this is proved; in all, is probable.

"The inspection and comparison of living forms add to this argument examples without number. Of all large terrestrial animals, the structure is very much alike; their senses nearly the same; their natural functions and passions nearly the same; their viscera nearly the same, both in substance, shape, and office; digestion, nutrition, circulation, secretion, go on, in a similar manner, in all; the great circulating fluid is the same; for I think no difference has been discovered in the properties of blood from whatever animal it be drawn. The experiment of transfusion proves that the blood of one animal will serve for another. The skeletons also of the larger terrestrial animals show particular varieties, but still under a great general affinity. The resemblance is somewhat less, yet sufficiently evident, between quadrupeds and birds. They are all alike in five respects, for one in which they differ.

"In fish, which belong to another department, as it were, of nature, the points of comparison become fewer. But we never lose sight of our analogy; e. g. we still meet with a stomach, a liver, a spine; with bile and blood; with teeth; with eyes, which eyes are only slightly varied from our own, and which variation, in truth demonstrates, not an interruption, but a continuance of the same exquisite plan; for it is the adaptation of the organ to the element, namely, to the different refraction of light passing into the eye out of a denser medium. The provinces, also, themselves of water and earth, are connected by the species of animals which inhabit both; and also by a large tribe of aquatic animals, which closely resemble the terrestrial in their internal structure; I mean the cetaceous tribe which have hot blood, respiring lungs, bowels, and other essential parts, like those of land animals. This similitude surely bespeaks the same creation, and the same Creator.

"Insects and shell fish appear to me to differ from other classes of animals the most widely of any. Yet even here, beside many points of particular resemblance, there exists a general relation of a peculiar kind. It is the relation of inversion; the law of contrariety: namely, that whereas in other animals, the bones to which the muscles are attached

lie *within* the body; in insects and shell fish they lie on the *outside* of it. The shell of a lobster performs to the animal the office of a bone, by furnishing to the tendons that fixed basis or immovable fulcrum, without which mechanically they could not act. The crust of an insect is its shell, and answers the like purpose. The shell also of an oyster stands in the place of a bone; the basis of the muscles being fixed to it, in the same manner as, in other animals, they are fixed to the bones. All which (under wonderful varieties, indeed, and adaptations of form) confesses an imitation, a remembrance, a carrying on of the same plan."

If in a large house, wherein are many mansions and a vast variety of inhabitants, there appears exact order, all from the highest to the lowest continually attending their proper business, and all lodged and constantly provided for suitably to their several conditions, we find ourselves obliged to acknoweldge one wise economy; and if in a great city or commonwealth there is a perfectly regular administration, so that not only the whole society enjoys an undisturbed peace, but every member has a station assigned him which he is best qualified to fill, the unenvied chiefs constantly attending their more important cares, served by the busy inferiors, who have all a suitable accommodation, and food convenient for them, the very meanest ministering to the public utility, and protected by the public care;—if, I say, in such a community we must conclude there is a ruling counsel, which if not naturally yet is politically one, and unless united, could not produce such harmony and order; much more have we reason to recognize one governing Intelligence in the earth, in which there are so many ranks of beings disposed of in the most convenient manner, having all their several provinces appointed to them, and their several kinds and degrees of enjoyment liberally provided for, without encroaching upon, but rather being mutually useful to each other, according to a settled and obvious subordination. What else can account for this but a sovereign wisdom, a common provident nature presiding over, and caring for the whole? (*Abernethy's Sermons.*)

The importance of the doctrine of the Divine unity is obvious. The existence of one God is the basis of all true religion. Polytheism confounds and unsettles all moral distinction, divides and destroys obligation, and takes away all sure trust and hope from man. There is one God who created us; we are therefore his property, and bound to him by an absolute obligation of obedience. He is the sole Ruler of the world, and his one immutable will constitutes the one immutable law of our actions, and thus questions of morality are settled on permanent foundations. To him alone we owe repentance, and confession of sin; to one Being alone we are directed to look for pardon, in the method he has appointed; and if he be at peace with us, we need fear the wrath of no other, for he is *supreme:* we are not at a loss among a crowd of supposed deities, to which of them we shall turn in trouble; he alone receives prayer, and

he is the sole and sufficient object of *trust*. When we know HIM, we know a Being of absolute perfection, and need no other friend or refuge.

Among the discoveries made to us by Divine revelation, we find not only declarations of the *existence* and *unity* of God, but of his nature or *substance*, which is plainly affirmed to be *spiritual*; "*God is a* SPIRIT." The sense of the Scriptures in this respect cannot be mistaken. Innumerable passages and allusions in them show, that the terms *spirit* and *body*, or matter, are used in the popular sense for substances of a perfectly distinct kind, and which are manifested by distinct and in many respects opposite and incommunicable properties: that the former only can perceive, think, reason, will, and act; that the latter is passive, inpercipient, divisible, and corruptible. Under these views, and in this popular language, God is spoken of in Holy Writ. He is *spirit*, not *body*; *mind*, not *matter*. He is pure spirit, unconnected even with bodily form or organs; "*the invisible God, whom no man hath seen nor can see*," an immaterial, incorruptible, impassible substance, an immense mind or intelligence, self acting, self moving, wholly above the perception of bodily sense; free from the imperfections of matter, and all the imfirmities of corporeal beings; far more excellent than any finite and created spirits, because their Creator, and therefore styled, "*the Father of spirits*," and "*the God of the spirits of all flesh*."

Such is the express testimony of Scripture as to the Divine nature. That the distinction which it holds between matter and spirit should be denied or disregarded by infidel philosophers, is not a matter of surprise, since it is easy and as consistent in them to materialize God as man. But that the attributes of spirit should have been ascribed to matter by those who nevertheless profess to admit the authority of the Biblical revelation, as in the case of the modern Unitarians and some others, is an instance of singular inconsistency. It shows with what daring an unhallowed philosophy will pursue its speculations, and warrants the conclusion, that the Scriptures in such cases are not acknowledged upon their *own proper principles*, but only so far as they are supposed to agree with, or not to oppose the philosophic system which such men may have adopted. For hesitate as they may, to deny the distinction between matter and spirit, is to deny the spirituality of God; and to contradict the distinction which, as to man, is constantly kept up in every part of the Bible, the distinction between flesh and spirit. To assert that consciousness, thought, volition, &c, are the results of organization, is to deny also what the Scripture so expressly affirms, that the souls of men exist in a disembodied state: and that in this disembodied state, not only do they exist, but that they think and feel, and act without any diminution of their energy or capacity. The immateriality of the Divine Being may therefore be considered as a point of great importance, not only as it affects

our views of his nature and attributes; but because when once it is established that there exists a pure Spirit, living, intelligent, and invested with moral properties, the question of the immateriality of the human soul may be considered as almost settled. Those who deny that, must admit that the Deity is material; or if they start at this, they must be convicted of the unphilosophical and absurd attempt to invest a substance allowed to be of an entirely different nature, the body of man, with those attributes of intelligence and volition which, in the case of the Divine Being, they have allowed to be the properties of pure, unembodied spirit. The propositions are totally inconsistent, for they who believe that God is wholly an immaterial, and that man is wholly a material being, admit that spirit is intelligent, and that matter is intelligent. They cannot then be of different essences, and if the premises be followed out to their legitimate conclusion, either that which thinks in man must be allowed to be spiritual, or a material Deity must follow. The whole truth of revelation, both as to God and his creature man, must be acknowledged, or the Atheism of Spinoza and Hobbes must be admitted.

The decision of Scripture on this point is not to be shaken by human reasoning, were it more plausible in its attempt to prove that matter is capable of originating thought, and that mind is a mere result of organization. The evidence from reason is however highly confirmatory of the absolute spirituality of the nature of God, and of the unthinking nature of matter.

If we allow a First Cause at all, we must allow that cause to be intelligent. This has already been proved, from the *design and contrivance* manifested in his works. The first argument for the spirituality of God is therefore drawn from his intelligence, and it rests upon this principle, that intelligence is not a property of matter.

With material substance we are largely acquainted; and as to the great mass of material bodies, we have the means of knowing that they are wholly unintelligent. This cannot be denied of every unorganized portion of matter. Its essential properties are found to be solidity, extension, divisibility, mobility, passiveness, &c. In all its forms and mutations, from the granite rock to the yielding atmosphere and the rapid lightning, these essential properties are discovered; they take an infinite variety of accidental modes, but give no indication of intelligence, or approach to intelligence. If then to know be a property of matter, it is clearly not an *essential* property, inasmuch as it is agreed by all, that vast masses of this substance exist without this property, and it follows, that it must be an *accidental* one. This therefore would be the first absurdity into which those would be driven who suppose the Divine nature to be material, that as intelligence, if allowed to be a property of matter, is an *accidental* and not an *essential* property, on this theory it

would be possible to conceive of the existence of a Deity without any intelligence at all. For take away any property from a subject which is not essential to it, and its essence still remains; and if intelligence, which in this view is but an accidental attribute of Deity, were annihilated, a Deity without perception, thought, or knowledge, would still remain. So monstrous a conclusion shows, that if a God be at all allowed, the absolute spirituality of his nature must inevitably follow. For if we cannot suppose a Deity without intelligence, then do we admit *intelligence* to be one of his *essential* attributes; and, as it is easy for every one to observe that this is not an essential property of matter, the substance to which it is essential cannot be material.

If the unthinking nature of unorganized matter furnishes an argument in favour of the spirituality of Deity, the attempt to prove from the fact of intelligence being found in connection with matter in an organized form, that intelligence, under certain modifications, is a property of matter, may from its fallacy be also made to yield its evidence in favour of the truth.

The position assumed is, that intelligence is the result of material organization. This at least is not true of every form of organized matter. Of the unintelligent character of vegetables we have the same evidence as of the earth on which we tread. The organization therefore which is assumed to be the cause of thought, is that which is found in animals; and to use the argument of Dr. Priestley, "the powers of sensation, or perception, and thought, as belonging to man, not having been found but in conjunction with a certain organized system of matter, the conclusion is that they depend upon such a system." It need not now be urged, that constant connection does not imply *necessary* connection; and that sufficient reasons may be given to prove the connection alleged to be accidental and arbitrary. It is sufficient in the first instance to deny this supposed constant connection between intellectual properties and systems of animal organization; and thus to take away entirely the foundation of the argument.

Man is to be considered in two states, that of *life*, and that of *death*. In one he thinks, and in the other he ceases to think; and yet for some time after death, in many cases, the organization of the human frame continues as perfect as before. All do not die of organic disease. Death by suffocation, and other causes, is often effected without any visible violence being done to the brain, or any other of the most delicate organs. This is a well established fact; for the most accurate anatomical observation is not able to discover, in such cases as we have referred to, the slightest organic derangement. The machine has been stopped, but the machine itself has suffered no injury; and from the period of death to the time when the matter of the body begins to submit to the laws of chemical decomposition, its organization is as perfect

as during life. If an opponent replies, that organic violence *must* have been sustained, though it is indiscernible, he begs the question, and assumes that thought must depend upon organization, the very point in dispute. If more modest, he says, that the organs *may* have suffered, he can give no proof of it; appearances are all against him. And if he argues from the phenomenon of the connection of thought with organization, grounding himself upon what is visible to observation only, the argument is completely repulsed by an appeal in like manner to the *fact*, that the organization of the animal frame can be often exhibited, visibly unimpaired by those causes which have produced death, and yet incapable of thought and intelligence. The conclusion therefore is, that mere organization cannot be the cause of intelligence, since it is plain that precisely the same state of the organs shall often be found before and after death; and yet, without any violence having been done to them, in one moment man shall be actually intelligent, and in the next incapable of a thought. So far then from the connection between mental phenomena, and the arrangement of matter in the animal structure being "*constant*," the ground of the argument of Priestley and other materialists; it is often visibly broken; for a perfect organization of the animal remains after perception has become extinct.

In support of this argument, we may urge the representations of Scripture, upon that class of materialists who have not proceeded to the full length of denying its authority. Adam was *formed* out of the dust of the earth, the organism of his frame was therefore complete, before he became "a living soul." God breathed into him "the breath of lives," and whatever different persons may understand by that inspiration it certainly was not an organizing operation. The man was first *formed* or *organized*, and then life was imparted. Before the animating breath was inspired, he was not intelligent, because he lived not; yet the organization was complete before either life or the power of perception was imparted; thought did not arise out of his organic structure, as an effect from its cause.

The doctrine that mere organization is the cause of perception, &c, being clearly untenable, we shall probably be told, that the subject supposed in the argument, is a *living* organized being. If so, then the proof that matter can think drawn from organization is given up, and another cause of the phenomenon of intelligence is introduced. This is *life*, and the argument will be considerably altered. It will no longer be, as we have before quoted it from Dr. Priestley, "that the powers of sensation or perception and thought, never having been found but in conjunction with a certain organized system of matter, the conclusion is that they depend upon such a system;" but that these powers not having been found but in conjunction with animal *life*, they depend upon that as their cause.

What then is *life*, which is thus exhibited as the cause of intelligence, and as the proof that matter is capable of perception and thought? In its largest and commonly received sense, it is that inherent activity which distinguishes vegetable and animal bodies from the soils in which the former grow, and on which the latter tread. A vegetable is said to live, because it has motion within itself, and is capable of absorption, secretion, nutrition, growth, and the reproduction of its kind. With al this it exhibits no mental phenomena, no sensation, no consciousness, no volition, no reflection; in a word, it is utterly unintelligent. We have here a proof then as satisfactory as our argument from organization, that *life*, at least life of any kind, is not the cause of intelligence, for in ten thousand instances we see it existing in bodies to which it imparts no mental properties at all.

If then it be said that the life intended as the cause of intelligence is not *vegetable*, but *animal* life, the next step in the inquiry is, in what the life of an animal differs from that of a vegetable; and if we go into the camp of the enemy himself, we shall find him laying it down, that to animals a double life belongs, the *organic* and the *animal*, the former of which animals, and even man, has only in common with the vegetable. One modification of life, says Bichat, (upon whose scheme our modern materialists have modelled their arguments,) is common to vegetables and animals, the other peculiar to the latter. "Compare together two individuals, one taken from each of these kingdoms: one exists only within itself, has no other relations to external objects than those of nutrition; is born, grows, and perishes, attached to the soil which received its germ. The other joins to this *internal* life, which it possesses in a still higher degree, an external life, which establishes numerous relations between it and the neighbouring objects, unites its existence to that of other beings, and draws it near to, or removes it from them, according to its wants and fears." (*Recherches sur la vie et la mort.*) This is only in other words to say, that there is one kind of life in man, which, as in the vegetable, is the cause of growth, circulation, assimilation, nutrition, excretion, and similar functions; and another on which depend sensation, the passions, will, memory, and other attributes which we attribute to spirit. We have gained then by this distinction another step in the argument. There is a life common to animals and to vegetables. Whether this be simple mechanism or something more, matters nothing to the conclusion; it confers neither sensation, nor volition, nor reason. That life in men, and in the inferior animals, which is common to them and to vegetables, called, by Bichat and his followers, *organic life*, is evidently not the cause of intelligence.

What then is that higher species of life called *animal* life, on which we are told our mental powers depend? And here the French materialist, whose notions have been so readily adopted into our own schools of

physiology, shall speak for himself. "The functions of the animal form two distinct classes. One of these consists of an habitual succession of assimilation and concretion, by which it is constantly transforming into its own substance the particles of other bodies, and then rejecting them when they have become useless. By the other he perceives surrounding objects; reflects on his sensations, performs voluntary motions under their influence, and generally communicates, by the voice, his pleasures or pains; his desires or fears." "*The assembled functions of the second class form the animal life.*"

This strange definition of life has been adopted by Lawrence, and other disciples of the French school of materialism; but its absurdity as a definition is obvious, and could only have been adopted as a veil of words to hide a conclusion fatal to the favourite system. So far from being a definition of life, it is no more than a description of the "functions" of a vital principle or power, whatever that power or principle may be. *Function* is a manner in which any power developes itself, or as Lawrence, the disciple of Bichat, has properly expressed it, "*a mode of action;*" and to say that an assemblage of the modes in which any thing acts, is that which acts, or "forms" that which acts, is the greatest possible trifling and folly.

But Bichat is not the only one of modern materialists who refuse honestly to pursue the inquiry, "what is life?" when even affecting to describe or defend it. Cuvier, another great authority in the same school, at one time says, that be life what it may, it cannot be what the vulgar suppose it, a particular principle. (Principe particulier.) In another place he acknowledges that life can proceed only from life. (La vie naït que de la vie.) Then again he considers it an internal principle; (un principe interieur d'entretien et de reparation;) and last of all says, what Mr. Lawrence has since repeated *verbatim*, that life consists in the sum total of all the functions. (Il consiste dans l'ensemble des functions qui servent a nourir le corps, c'est a dire la digestion, l'absorption, la circulation, &c.) Thus he makes life a cause which owes its existence to its own operations, and consequently a cause which, had it not operated to produce itself, had never operated nor existed at all! (*Vide Medical Review*, Sept. 1822, Art. 1.) "It is truly pitiful," says a physiologist of other opinions, "to think of a man with so many endowments, natural and acquired, driven as if blindfold by the fashion of the times, a contemptible vanity, or some wretched inclination, endeavouring to support with all his energy the extravagant idea that the phenomena of design and intelligence displayed in the form and structure of his species might have been the effects of some impulse or motion, or of some group of functions, as digestion, circulation, respiration, &c, which have accidentally happened to meet without any assignable cause

to bring them together, to hold them together, or to direct them." (*Dr. Barclay on Life and Organization.*)

These and many other examples are in proof, that the *cause* of vital properties cannot, we do not say be explained, but cannot even be *indicated* on the material system; and we are no nearer, for any thing which these physiologists say, to any satisfactory account of that life which is peculiar to animals and which has been distinguished from the *organic* life that is common to them and to vegetables. It is not the result of organization, for that "is no living principle, no active cause." "An organ is an instrument. Organization therefore is nothing more than a system of parts so constructed and arranged as to co-operate to one common purpose. It is an arrangement of instruments, and there must be *something beyond* to bring these instruments into action." (*Rennell's Remarks on Skepticism.*) If life cannot therefore be organization or the effect of it, it is not that inherent, mechanical, and chemical motion which is called life in vegetables, and which the physiologists have decided to be the same kind of life which they call organic in animals; for even the materialist acknowledges that to be a different species of life in animals, on which sensation, volition, and passion depend. What then is it? It is not a material *substance;* in that all agree. It is not the material effect of the material cause, organization; that has been shown to be absurd. It is not that mechanical and chemical inherent motion which performs so many functions in vegetables and in animals, so far as they have it in common with them; for no sensation or other mental phenomena are allowed to result from these. It is therefore plainly no *material* cause and no effect of *matter* at all; for no other hypothesis remains but that which places its source in an *immaterial* subject, operating upon and by material organs. For, to quote from a writer just mentioned, "that there is some invisible agent in every living organized system, seems to be an inference to which we are led almost irresistibly. When we see an animal starting from its sleep, contrary to the known laws of gravitation, without an external or elastic impulse, without the appearance of electricity, galvanism, magnetism, or chemical attraction: when we see it afterward moving its limbs in various directions, with different degrees of force and velocity, sometimes suspending and sometimes renewing the same motions, at the sound of a word or the sight of a shadow, can we refrain a moment from thinking that the cause of these phenomena is internal, that it is something different from the body, and that the several bodily organs are nothing more than the mere instruments which it employs in its operations? Not instruments indeed that can be manufactured, purchased, or exchanged, or that can at pleasure be varied in form, position, number, proportion, or magnitude; not instruments whose motions are dependent upon an external impulse, on gravity, elasticity, magnetism, galvanism, on electricity or

chemical attraction; but instruments of a peculiar nature, instruments that grow, that are moved by the will, and which can be regulated and kept in repair by no agent but the one for which they were primarily destined; instruments so closely related to that agent, that they cannot be injured, handled or breathed upon, approached by cold, by wind, by rain, without exciting in it certain sensations of pleasure or of pain; sensations which, if either unusual or excessive, are generally accompanied with joy or grief, hopes or alarms: instruments, in short, that exert so constant and powerful reaction on the agent that employs them, that they modify almost every phenomenon which it exhibits, and to such an extent, that no person can confidently say what would be the *effect of* its energies if deprived of instruments; or what would be the *effect of* its energies if furnished with instruments of a different species, or if furnished with instruments of different materials, less dependent on external circumstances, and less subject to the laws of gross and inert matter." (*Barclay on Life and Organization.*)

Life, then, whether organic or animal, is not the cause of intelligence, and thus all true reasoning upon these phenomena brings us to the philosophy of the Scriptures, that the presence of an immaterial soul with the body, is the source of animal life; and that the separation of the soul from the body is that circumstance which causes death. (6) Farther proofs however are not wanting, that matter is incapable of thought and that its various qualities are inconsistent with mental phenomena.

"*Extension* is a universal quality of matter; being that cohesion and continuity of its parts by which a body occupies space. The idea of extension is gained by our external senses of signt and of touch. But thought is neither visible nor tangible, it occupies no external space, it has no contiguous or cohering parts. A mind enlarged by education and science, a memory stored with the richest treasures of varied knowledge, occupies no more space than that of the meanest and most illiterate rustic.

"In body again we find a *vis inertiæ*, that is, a certain quality by which it resists any change in its present state. We know by experiment, that a body, when it has received an impulse, will persevere in a

(6) The celebrated Hunter, "in searching for the principle of life, on the supposition that it was something visible, fruitlessly enough looked for it in the blood, the chyle, the brain, the lungs, and other parts of the body; but not finding it in any of them exclusively, concluded that it must be a consequence of the union of the whole, and depend upon organism. But to this conclusion he could not long adhere, after observing that the composition of matter does not give life; and that a dead body may have all the composition it ever had. Last of all, he drew the true, or at least the candid conclusion, *that he knew nothing about the matter.*" (*Medico-Chirurgical Review*, Sept. 1822.) This is the conclusion to which mere philosophy comes, and the only one at which it can arrive, till it stoops to believe that there is true philosophy in the Scriptures.

direct course and a uniform velocity, until its motion shall be either disturbed or retarded by some external power; and again, that, being at rest, it will remain so for ever, unless motion shall have been communicated to it from without. Since matter therefore necessarily resists all change of its present state, its motion and its rest are purely passive; spontaneous motion, therefore, must have some other origin. Nor is this spontaneous motion to be attributed to the simple powers of life, for we have seen that in the life of vegetation there is no spontaneous motion; the plant has no power either to remove itself out of the position in which it is fixed, or even to accelerate or retard the motion which takes place within it. Nor has man himself, in a sleep perfectly sound, the power of locomotion any more than a plant, nor any command over the various active processes which are going on within his own body. But when he is awake, he will rise from his resting place—if mere matter, whether living or dead were concerned, he would have remained there like a plant or a stone for ever. He will walk forward—he will change his course—he will stop. Can matter, even though endowed with the life of vegetation, perform any such acts as these? Here is motion fairly begun without any external impulse, and stopped without any external obstacle. The activity of a plant, on the contrary, is neither spontaneous nor locomotive; it is derived in regular succession from parent substances, and it can be stopped only by external obstacles, such as the disturbance of the organization. A mass even of living matter requires something beyond its own powers to overcome the *vis inertiæ* which still distinguishes it, and to produce active and spontaneous motion.

"*Hardness* and *impenetrability* are qualities of matter; but no one of common sense, without a very palpable metaphor, could ever consider them as the properties of thought.

"There is another property of matter, which is, if possible, still more inconsistent with thought than any of the former, I mean its *divisibility*. Let us take any material substance, the brain, the heart, or any other body; which we would have endowed with thought, and inquire of what is this substance composed. It is the aggregate of an indefinite number of separable and separate parts. Now the experience of what passes within our minds will inform us, that unity is essential to a thinking being. That consciousness which establishes the one individual being, which every man knows himself to be, cannot, without a contradiction in terms, be separated, or divided. No man can think in two separate places at the same time: nor, again, is his consciousness made up of a number of separate consciousnesses; as the solidity, the colour, and motion of the whole body is made up of the distinct solidities, colours, and motions of its parts. As a thinking and a conscious being, then, man must be essentially one. As a partaker of the life of vegetation

he is separable into ten thousand different parts. If then it is the brain of a man which is conscious and thinks, his consciousness and thought must be made up of as many separate parts as there are particles in its material substance. which is contrary to common sense and experience. Whatever, therefore, our thought may be, or in whatever it may reside, it is essentially indivisible; and, therefore, wholly inconsistent with the divisibility of a material substance.

"From every quality, therefore, of matter, with which we are acquainted, we shall be warranted in concluding, that without a contradiction in terms, it cannot be pronounced capable of thought. A thinking substance may be combined with a stone, a tree, or an animal body, but not one of the three can of itself become a thinking being." (*Rennell on Skepticism.*)

"The notions we annex to the words, MATTER and MIND, as is well remarked by Dr. Reid, are merely relative. If I am asked, what I mean by matter? I can only explain myself by saying, it is that which is extended, figured, coloured, movable, hard or soft, rough or smooth, hot or cold;—that is, I can define it in no other way than by enumerating its sensible qualities. It is not matter or body which I perceive by my senses; but only extension, figure, colour, and certain other qualities, which the constitution of my nature leads me to refer to something which is extended, figured, and coloured. The case is precisely similar with respect to mind. We are not immediately conscious of its existence, but we are conscious of sensation, thought, and volition; operations which imply the existence of something which feels, thinks, and wills. Every man too is impressed with an irresistible conviction, that all these sensations, thoughts, and volitions, belong to one and the same being; to that being, which he calls *himself;* a being which he is led, by the constitution of his nature, to consider as something distinct from his body, and as not liable to be impaired by the loss or mutilation of any of his organs.

"From these considerations, it appears that we have the same evidence for the existence of mind, that we have for the existence of body; nay, if there be any difference between the two cases, that we have stronger evidence for it; inasmuch as the one is suggested to us by the subjects of our own consciousness, and the other merely by the objects of our perceptions." (*Stewart's Essays.*)

Farther observations on the immateriality of the human soul will be adduced in their proper place. The reason why the preceding argument on this subject has been here introduced, is not only that the spirituality of the Divine nature might be established by proving that *intelligence* is not a material attribute; but to keep in view the connection between the spirituality of *God*, and that of *man*, who was made in his image; and to show the relation which also exists between the doctrine of the im

terialism of the human soul, and absolute Atheism, and thus to hold out a warning against such speculations. There is no middle course in fact, though one may be effected. If we materialize man, we must materialize God, or, in other words, deny a First Cause, one of whose *essential* attributes is intelligence. It is then of little consequence what scheme of Atheism is adopted. On the other hand, if we allow spirituality to God, it follows as a necessary corollary, that we must allow it to man. These doctrines stand or fall together.

On a subject which arises out of the foregoing discussion, a single observation will be sufficient. It is granted that, on the premises laid down, not only must an immaterial principle be allowed to man, but to all animals possessed of volition; and few, perhaps none, are found without this property. But though this has often been urged as an objection, it can cost the believer in revelation nothing to admit it. It strengthens, and does not weaken his argument; and it is perfectly in accordance with Scripture, which speaks of "the soul of a beast," as well as of "the soul of man." Vastly, nay, we might say, infinitely different are they in the *class* and degree of their powers, though of the same spiritual essence; but they have both properties which cannot be attributed to matter. It does not, however, follow that they are *immortal*, because they are *immaterial*. The truth is, that God only hath independent immortality, because he only is self existent, and neither human nor brute souls are of *necessity* immortal. God hath given this privilege to man, not by a necessity of nature, which would be incompatible with dependence, but by his own will, and the continuance of his sustaining power. But he seems to have denied it to the inferior animals, and according to the language of Scripture, "the spirit of a beast goeth downward." The doctrine of the *natural* immortality of man, will, however, be considered in its proper place.

CHAPTER III.

ATTRIBUTES *of God—Eternity—Omnipotence—Ubiquity.*

FROM the Scriptures we have learned, that there is one God, the Creator of all things, and consequently living and intelligent. The demonstrations of this truth, which surround us in the works of nature, have been also adverted to. By the same sacred revelations we have also been taught, that, as to the Divine essence, God is a *Spirit;* and in the farther manifestations they have made of him, we learn, that as all things were made by him, he was *before* all things: that *their* being is *dependent, his independent;* that he is eminently BEING, according to his own peculiar appellation "I AM;" self existent, and ETERNAL. In the Scripture doctrine of God, we, however, not only find it asserted

that God had no beginning, but that he shall have no end. Eternity *ad partem post* is ascribed to him, for in the most absolute sense, he hath "*immortality*," and he "*only*" hath it, by virtue of the inherent perfection of his nature. It is this which completes those sublime and impressive views of the eternity of God, with which the revelation he has been pleased to make of himself abounds. "*From everlasting to everlasting* thou art God. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hand. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and *thy years shall have no end*." He "inhabiteth eternity," fills and occupies the whole round of boundless duration, and "is the *first* and the *last*."

In these representations of the eternal existence and absolute immortality of the Divine Being, something more than the mere idea of infinite duration is conveyed. No creature can, without contradiction, be supposed to have been *from* eternity; but even a creature may be supposed to continue to exist for ever, in as strict a sense as God himself will continue to exist for ever. Its existence, however, being originally dependent and derived, must continue so. It is not, so to speak, *in its nature* to live, or it would never have been non-existent; and what it has not from itself, it has received, and must through every moment of actual existence receive from its Maker. But the very phrase in which the Scriptures speak of the eternity of God, suggests a meaning deeper than that of mere duration. They contrast the stability of the Divine existence with the vanishing and changing nature of all his works, and represent them as reposing upon him for support, while he not only depends not upon any, but rests upon himself. He lives by virtue of his nature, and is *essentially* unchangeable. For to the nature of that which exists without cause, life must be essential. In him who is "the fountain of life," there can be no principle of decay. There can be no desire to cease to be, in him who is perfectly *blessed*, because of the unbounded excellence of his nature. To him existence must be the source of infinite enjoyment, both from the contemplation of his own designs, and the manifestation of his glory, purity, and benevolence, to the intelligent creatures he has made to know and to be beatified by such discoveries and benefits. No external power can control, or in any way affect his felicity, his perfection or his being. Such are the depths of glory and peculiarity into which the Divine eternity, as stated in the Scriptures, leads the wondering mind; and of which the wisest of heathens, who ascribed immortality to one, or to many gods, had no conception. They were ever fancying something *out* of God, as the cause of their immortal being; *fate*, or external *necessity*, or some similar and vague notion, which obscured, as to them, one of the peculiar glories of the *eternal*

power and Godhead," who of and from his own essential nature, IS, and WAS, and SHALL BE.

Some apprehensions of this great truth are seen in the sayings of a few of the Greek sages, though much obscured by their other notions. Indeed, that appropriate name of God, so venerated among the Jews, the *nomen tetragrammaton*, which we render JEHOVAH, was known among the heathens to be the name under which the Jews worshipped the supreme God; and "from this Divine name," says Parkhurst, *sub voce*, "the ancient Greeks had their Ιη Ιη in their invocation of the gods. (7) It expresses not the *attributes*, but the *essence* of God, which was the reason why the Jews deemed it *ineffable*. The Septuagint

(7) A curious instance of the transmission of this *name*, and one of the peculiarities of the Hebrew faith, even into China, is mentioned in the following extract of "A Memoir of Lao-tseu, a Chinese philosopher, who flourished in the sixth century before our era, and who professed the opinions ascribed to Plato and to Pythagoras." (By M. Abel Remusat.)—"The metaphysics of Lao-tseu have many other remarkable features, which I have endeavoured to develope in my memoir, and which, for various reasons, I am obliged to pass over in silence. How, in fact, should I give an idea of those lofty abstractions, of those inextricable subtleties, in which the oriental imagination disports and goes astray? It will suffice to say here, that the opinions of the Chinese philosopher on the origin and constitution of the universe, have neither ridiculous fables nor offensive absurdities; that they bear the stamp of a noble and elevated mind; and that, in the sublime reveries which distinguish them, they exhibit a striking and incontestable conformity with the doctrine which was professed a little later by the schools of Pythagoras and Plato. Like the Pythagoreans and the Stoics, our author admits, as the First Cause, Reason, an ineffable, uncreated Being, that is the type of the universe, and has no type but itself. Like Pythagoras, he takes human souls to be emanations of the ethereal substance, which are reunited with it after death; and, like Plato, he refuses to the wicked the faculty of returning into the bosom of the Universal Soul. Like Pythagoras, he gives to the first principles of things the names of numbers, and his cosmogony is, in some degree, algebraical. He attaches the chain of beings to that which he calls *One*, then to *Two*, then to *Three*, which have made all things. The divine Plato, who had adopted this mysterious dogma, seems to be afraid of revealing it to the profane. He envelopes it in clouds in his famous letter to the three friends; he teaches it to Dionysius of Syracuse; but by enigmas, as he says himself, lest his tablets falling into the hands of some stranger they should be read and understood. Perhaps the recollection of the recent death of Socrates imposed this reserve upon him. Lao-tseu does not make use of these indirect ways; and what is most clear in his book is, that a *Triune* Being formed the universe. To complete the singularity, he gives to his being a Hebrew name hardly changed, the very name which in our book designates him, WHO WAS, AND IS, AND SHALL BE. This last circumstance confirms all that the tradition indicated of a journey to the west, and leaves no doubt of the origin of his doctrine. Probably he received it either from the Jews of the ten tribes, whom the conquest of Sulmanazan had just dispersed throughout Asia, or from the apostles of some Phenician sect, to which those philosophers also belonged, who were the masters and precursors of Pythagoras and Plato."

translators preserved the same idea in the word Κυριος, by which they translated it, from κυρω, *sum*, I am. This word is said by critics not to be classically used to signify God, which would mark the peculiarity of this appellation in the Septuagint version more strongly, and convey something of the great idea of the *self*, or *absolute* existence ascribed to the Divine nature in the Hebrew Scriptures, to those of the heathen philosophers who met with that translation. That it could not be passed over unnoticed, we may gather from St. Hilary, who says, that before his conversion to Christianity, meeting with this appellation of God in the Pentateuch, he was struck with admiration, nothing being so proper to God as *to be*. Among the Jews, however, the import of this stupendous name was preserved unimpaired by metaphysical speculations. It was registered in their sacred books: from the fulness of its meaning the loftiest thoughts are seen to spring up in the minds of the prophets, which amplify with an awful and mysterious grandeur their descriptions of his peculiar glories, in contrast with the vain gods of the heathen, and with every actual existence, however exalted, in heaven and in earth.

On this subject of the eternal duration of the Divine Being, many have held a metaphysical refinement. "The eternal existence of God," it is said, "is not to be considered as *successive*; the ideas we gain from *time* are not to be allowed in our conceptions of his duration. As he fills all space with his immensity, he fills all duration with his *eternity*; and with him eternity is *nunc stans*, a permanent *now*, incapable of the relations of past, present, and future." Such, certainly, is not the view given us of this mysterious subject in the Scriptures; and if it should be said that they speak *popularly*, and are accommodated to the infirmity of the thoughts of the body of mankind, we may reply, that philosophy has not, with all its boasting of superior light, carried our views on this attribute of the Divine nature at all beyond the revelation; and, in attempting it, has only obscured the conceptions of its disciples. "Filling duration with his eternity" is a phrase without any meaning: "For how can any man conceive a permanent instant, which co-exists with a perpetually flowing duration? One might as well apprehend a mathematical point co-extended with a line, a surface, and all dimensions." (*Abernethy's Sermons.*) As this notion has, however, been made the basis of some opinions, which will be remarked upon in their proper place, it may be proper briefly to examine it.

Whether we get our idea of time from the motion of bodies *without* us, or from the consciousness of the succession of our own ideas, or both, is not important to this inquiry. Time, in our conceptions, is divisible. The artificial divisions are years, months, days, minutes, seconds, &c. We can conceive of yet smaller portions of duration, and whether we have given to them a tificial names or not, we can

conceive no otherwise of duration, than continuance of being, estimated as to degree, by this artificial admeasurement, and therefore as substantially answering to it. It is not denied but that duration is something distinct from these its artificial measures; yet of this every man's consciousness will assure him, that we can form no idea of duration except in this successive manner. But we are told, that the eternity of God is a fixed eternal *now*, from which all ideas of succession, of past and future, are to be excluded; and we are called upon to conceive of eternal duration without reference to past or future, and to the exclusion of the idea of that *flow* under which we conceive of time. The proper *abstract* idea of duration is, however, *simple continuance of being*, without any reference to the exact degree or extent of it, because in no other way can it be equally applicable to all the substances of which it is the attribute. It may be finite or infinite, momentary or eternal, but that depends upon the substance of which it is the quality, and not upon its own nature. Our own observation and experience teach us how to apply it to ourselves. As to us, duration is dependent and finite; as to God, it is infinite; but in both cases the originality or dependence, the finity or infinity of it, arises not out of the nature of duration itself, but out of other qualities of the subjects respectively.

Duration, then, as applied to God, is no more than an extension of the idea as applied to ourselves; and to exhort us to conceive of it as something essentially different, is to require us to conceive what is inconceivable. It is to demand of us to think without ideas. Duration is continuance of existence, continuance of existence is capable of being longer or shorter, and hence necessarily arises the idea of the succession of the minutest points of duration into which we can conceive it divided. Beyond this the mind cannot go, it forms the idea of duration no other way; and if what we call duration be any thing different from this in God, it is not duration, properly so called, according to human ideas; it is something else, for which there is no name among men, because there is no idea, and therefore it is impossible to reason about it. As long as metaphysicians use the term, they must take the idea: if they spurn the idea, they have no right to the term, and ought at once to confess that they can go no farther. Dr. Cudworth defines infinity of duration to be nothing else but *perfection*, as including in it necessary existence and immutability. This, it is true, is as much a definition of the moon, as of infinity of duration; but it is valuable, as it shows that, in the view of this great man, though an advocate of the *nunc stans*, the standing now of eternity, we must abandon the term duration, if we give up the only idea under which it can be conceived.

It follows from this, therefore, that either we must apply the term duration to the Divine Being in the same sense in which we apply it to creatures, with the extension of the idea to a duration which has no

bounds and limits, or blot it out of our creeds, as a word to which our minds, with all the aid they may derive from the labours of metaphysicians, can attach no meaning. The only notion which has the appearance of an objection to this successive duration, as applied to him, appears wholly to arise from confounding two very distinct things; succession in the duration, and change in the substance. Dr. Cudworth appears to have fallen into this error. He speaks of the duration of an imperfect nature, as sliding from the present to the future, expecting something of itself which is not yet in being, and of a perfect nature being essentially immutable, having a permanent and unchanging duration, never losing any thing of itself once present, nor yet running forward to meet something of itself which is not yet in being. Now, though this is a good description of a perfect and immutable nature, it is no description at all of an eternally-enduring nature. Duration implies no loss in the substance of any being, nor addition to it. A perfect nature never loses any thing of itself, nor expects more of itself than is possessed; but this does not arise from the attribute of its duration, however that attribute may be conceived of, but from its perfection, and consequent immutability. These attributes do not flow from the duration, but the extent of the duration from them. The argument is clearly good for nothing, unless it could be proved, that successive duration necessarily implies change in the nature; but that is contradicted by the experience of finite beings—their natures are not at all determined by their duration, but their duration by their natures; and they exist for a moment, or for ages, according to the nature which their Maker has impressed upon them. If it be said that, at least, successive duration imports that a being loses past duration, and expects the arrival of future existence, we reply, that this is no imperfection at all. Even finite creatures do not feel it to be an imperfection to *have existed*, and to look for *continued* and *interminable* being. It is true, with the past, we lose knowledge and pleasure; and expecting in all future periods increase of knowledge and happiness, we are reminded by that of our present imperfection; but this imperfection does not arise from our successive and flowing duration, and we never refer it to that. It is not the past which takes away our knowledge and pleasure; nor future duration, simply considered, which will confer the increase of both. Our imperfections arise out of the essential nature of our being, not out of the manner in which our being is continued. It is not the flow of our duration, but the flow of our natures which produces these effects. On the contrary, we think that the idea of our successive duration, that is, of continuance, is an excellency, and not a defect. Let all ideas of continuance be banished from the mind, let these be to us a *nunc semper stans*, during the whole of our being, and we appear to gain nothing—our pleasures surely are not diminished by the idea of long continuance

being added to present enjoyment; that they have been, and still remain, and will continue, on the contrary, greatly heightens them. Without the idea of a flowing duration, we could have no such measure of the continuance of our pleasures, and this we should consider an abatement of our happiness. What is so obvious an excellency in the spirit of man, and in angelic natures, can never be thought an imperfection in God, when joined with a nature essentially perfect and immutable.

But it may be said, that eternal duration, considered as successive, is only an artificial manner of measuring, and conceiving of duration; and is no more eternal duration itself than minutes and moments, the artificial measures of time, are time itself. Were this granted, the question would still be, whether there is any thing in *duration*, considered generally, or in *time* considered specially, which corresponds to these artificial methods of measuring, and conceiving of them. The ocean is measured by leagues; but the extension of the ocean, and the measure of it, are distinct. They, nevertheless, answer to each other Leagues are the nominal divisions of an extended surface, but there is a real extension, which answers to the artificial conception and admeasurement of it. In like manner, days, and hours, and moments, are the measures of time; but there is either something in time which answers to these measures, or not only the measure, but the thing itself is artificial—an imaginary creation. If any man will contend, that the period of duration which we call time, is nothing, no further dispute can be held with him, and he may be left to deny also the existence of matter, and to enjoy his philosophic revel in an ideal world. We apply the same argument to duration generally, whether finite or infinite. Minutes and moments, or smaller portions, for which we have no name, may be artificial, adopted to aid our conceptions; but conceptions of what? Not of any thing standing still, but of something going on. Of duration we have no other conception; and if there be nothing in nature which answers to this conception, then is duration itself imaginary, and we discourse about nothing. If the duration of the Divine Being admits not of past, present, and future, one of these two consequences must follow,—that no such attribute as that of eternity belongs to him,—or that there is no power in the human mind to conceive of it. In either case the Scriptures are greatly impugned; for "He who *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*," is a revelation of the eternity of God, which is then in no sense true. It is not true if used literally; and it is as little so if the language be figurative, for the figure rests on no basis, it illustrates nothing, it misleads.

God is OMNIPOTENT: Of this attribute also we have the most ample revelation, and in the most impressive and sublime language. From the annunciation in the Scriptures of a Divine existence who *was* "in the beginning" before all things, the very first step is the display of his al-

mighty power in the creation out of nothing, and the immediate arrangement in order and perfection, of the "*heaven and the earth*;" by which is meant not this globe only with its atmosphere, or even with its own celestial system, but the universe itself; for "*he made the stars also.*" We are thus placed at once in the presence of an agent of unbounded power, "the strict and correct conclusion being, that a power which could create such a world as this, must be beyond all comparison, greater than any which we experience in ourselves, than any which we observe in other visible agents, greater also than any which we can want for our individual protection and preservation, in the Being upon whom we depend; a power likewise to which we are not authorized by our observation or knowledge to assign any limits of space or duration." (*Paley.*)

That the sacred writers should so frequently dwell upon the omnipotence of God, has an important reason which arises out of the very design of that revelation which they were the instruments of communicating to mankind. Men were to be reminded of their obligations to obedience, and God is therefore constantly exhibited as the Creator, the Preserver, and Lord of all things. His reverent worship and fear was to be enjoined upon them, and by the manifestation of his works the veil was withdrawn from his glory and majesty. Idolatry was to be checked and reproved, and the true God was thus placed in contrast with the limited and powerless gods of the heathen. "Among the gods of the nations, is there no god like unto thee, neither are there any works like thy works." Finally, he was to be exhibited as the object of *trust* to creatures, constantly reminded by experience of their own infirmity and dependence, and to whom it was essential to know, that his power was absolute, unlimited, and irresistible.

In the revelation which was thus designed to awe and control the bad, and to afford strength of mind and consolation to the good under all circumstances, the omnipotence of God is therefore placed in a great variety of impressive views, and connected with the most striking illustrations.

It is presented by the fact of *creation*, the creation of beings out of *nothing*, which itself, though it had been confined to a single object, however minute, exceeds finite comprehension, and overwhelms the faculties. This with God required no effort—"He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast." The *vastness* and *variety* of his works enlarge the conception. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work." "He spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; he maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south; he doeth great things, past finding out, yea, and wonders without number. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth

upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in the thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; he hath compassed the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end." The *ease* with which he sustains, orders, and controls the most powerful and unruly of the elements, presents his omnipotence under an aspect of ineffable dignity and majesty. "By him all things consist." He brake up for the sea "a decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." "He looketh to the end of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven, to make the weight for the winds, to weigh the waters by measure, to make a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder." "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, meted out heaven with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the winds in a balance?" The descriptions of the Divine power are often *terrible*. "The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof; he divideth the sea by his power." "He removeth the mountains, and they know it not; he overturneth them in his anger, he shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble; he commandeth the sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars." The same absolute subjection of creatures to his dominion is seen among the intelligent inhabitants of the material universe, and angels, men the most exalted, and evil spirits, are swayed with as much ease as the least resistless elements. "He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." They veil their faces before his throne, and acknowledge themselves his servants. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers," "as the dust of the balance, less than nothing and vanity." "He bringeth princes to nothing." "He setteth up one and putteth down another," "for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is governor among the nations." "The angels that sinned, he cast down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The closing scenes of this world complete these transcendent conceptions of the majesty and power of God. The dead of all ages shall rise from their graves at his *voice;* and the sea shall give up the dead which are in it. Before his *face* heaven and earth flee away, the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven are shaken. The dead, small and great, stand before God, and are divided as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Of these amazing views of the omnipotence of God, spread almost through every page of the Scripture, the power lies in their *truth*. They are not eastern exaggerations, mistaken for sublimity. Every thing in nature answers to them, and renews from age to age the energy of the impression which they cannot but make upon the reflecting mind. The

order of the astral revolutions indicates the constant presence of an invisible but incomprehensible power:—the seas hurl the weight of their billows upon the rising shores, but every where find a "*bound* fixed by a perpetual decree;"—the tides reach their height; if they flowed on for a few hours, the earth would change places with the bed of the sea; but under an invisible control they become refluent. "He toucheth the mountains and they smoke," is not mere imagery. Every volcano is a testimony of that truth to nature which we find in the Scriptures; and earthquakes teach, that before him, "the pillars of the world tremble." Men collected into armies, and populous nations, give us vast ideas of human *power*: but let an army be placed amidst the sand storms and burning winds of the desert, as, in the east, has frequently happened· or before "*his frost*," as in our own day, in Russia, where one of the mightiest armaments was seen retreating before, or perishing under an unexpected visitation of snow and storm; or let the utterly helpless state of a populous country which has been visited by famine, or by a resistless pestilential disease, be reflected upon, and it is no figure of speech to say, that "all nations are before him *less than nothing* and *vanity*."

Nor in reviewing this doctrine of Scripture, ought the fine practical uses made of the omnipotence of God, by the sacred writers, to be overlooked. In them there is nothing said for the display of knowledge, as, too often, in heathen writers; no speculation without a *moral* subservient to it, and that by evident *design*. To excite and keep alive in man the fear and worship of God, and to bring him to a felicitous confidence in that almighty power which pervades and controls all things, we have observed, are the reasons for those ample displays of the omnipotence of God, which roll through the sacred volume with a sublimity that inspiration only could supply. "Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvellous works among all nations; for great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. Glory and honour are in his presence, and strength and gladness in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? If God be for us, who then can be against us? Our help standeth in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Thus, as one observes, "our natural fears, of which we must have many, remit us to God, and remind us, since we know what God is, to lay hold on his almighty power."

Ample however as are the views afforded us in Scripture of the power of God, we are not to consider the subject as bounded by them. As when the Scriptures declare the eternity of God, they declare it so

as to unveil to us something of that fearful peculiarity of the Divine nature, that he is the fountain of being to himself, and that he is eternal, because he is the "I AM;" so we are taught not to measure his omnipotence by the actual displays of it which have been made. They are the *manifestations* of the principle, but not the *measure* of its capacity; and should we resort to the discoveries of modern philosophy, which, by the help of instruments, has so greatly enlarged the known boundaries of the visible universe, and add to the stars, visible to the naked eye, new exhibitions of the Divine power in those nebulous appearances of the heavens which are resolvable into myriads of distinct celestial luminaries, whose immense distances commingle their light before it reaches our eyes; we thus almost infinitely expand the circle of created existence, and enter upon a formerly unknown and overwhelming range of Divine operation; but we are still reminded, that his power is truly *almighty* and *measureless*—"Lo, all these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is known of him, and the thunder of his power who can understand?" It is a mighty conception to think of a power from which all other power is derived, and to which it is subordinate; which nothing can oppose; which can beat down and annihilate all other powers whatever; a power which operates in the most perfect manner; at once, in an instant, with the utmost ease: but the Scriptures lead us to the contemplation of greater depths, and those unfathomable. The omnipotence of God is inconceivable and boundless. It arises from the infinite perfection of God, that his power can never be actually exhausted; and in every imaginable instant in eternity, that inexhaustible power of God can, if it please him, be adding either more creatures to those in existence, or greater perfection to them; since "it belongs to self-existent being, to be always full and communicative, and to the communicated, contingent being, to be ever empty and craving." (*Howe.*)

One limitation only we can conceive, which however detracts nothing from this perfection of the Divine nature.

"Where things in themselves imply a contradiction, as that a body may be extended and not extended, in a place and not in a place, at the same time; such things, I say, cannot be done by God, because contradictions are impossible in their own nature: nor is it any derogation from the Divine power to say, they cannot be done; for as the object of the understanding, of the eye, and the ear, is that which is intelligible, visible, and audible; so the object of power must be that which is possible; and as it is no prejudice to the most perfect understanding, or sight, or hearing, that it does not understand what is not intelligible, or see what is not visible, or hear what is not audible; so neither is it any diminution to the most perfect power, that it does not do what is not possible. (*Bishop Wilkins.*) In like manner, God cannot do any thing that is repugnant to his other perfections: he cannot lie,

nor deceive, nor deny himself; for this would be injurious to his truth. He cannot love sin, nor punish innocence; for this would destroy his holiness and goodness: and therefore to ascribe a power to him that is inconsistent with the rectitude of his nature, is not to magnify, but debase him; for all unrighteousness is weakness, a defection from right reason, a deviation from the perfect rule of action, and arises from a defect of goodness and power. In a word, since all the attributes of God are essentially the same, a power in him which tends to destroy any other attribute of the Divine nature, must be a power destructive of itself. Well therefore may we conclude him absolutely omnipotent, who, by being able to effect all things consistent with his perfections, showeth infinite ability, and by not being able to do any thing repugnant to the same perfections, demonstrates himself subject to no infirmity." (*Pearson on the Creed.*)

Nothing certainly in the finest writings of antiquity, were all their best thoughts collected as to the majesty and power of God, can bear any comparison to the views thus presented to us by Divine revelation. Were we to forget for a moment, what is the fact, that their noblest notions stand connected with fancies and vain speculations which deprive them of their force, their thought never rises so high, the current of it is broken, the *round* of lofty conception is not completed; and, unconnected as their views of Divine power were with the eternal destiny of man, and the very reason of creation, we never hear in them, as in the Scriptures, "the THUNDER of his power." One of the best specimens of heathen devotion is given below in the hymn of Cleanthes the Stoic; and, though noble and just, it sinks infinitely in the comparison.

"Hail, O Jupiter, most glorious of the immortals, invoked under many names, always most powerful, the first ruler of nature, whose law governs all things,—hail! for to address thee is permitted to all mortals.—For our race we have from thee; we mortals who creep upon the ground, receiving only the echo of thy voice. I therefore, I will celebrate thee, and will always sing thy power. All this universe rolling round the earth, obeys thee wherever thou guidest, and willingly is governed by thee. So vehement, so fiery, so immortal is the thunder which thou holdest subservient in thy unshaken hands; for, by the stroke of this, all nature was rooted; by this, thou directest the common reason which pervades all things, mixed with the greater and lesser luminaries; so great a king art thou, supreme through all; nor does any work take place without thee on the earth, nor in the ethereal sky, nor in the sea, except what the bad perform in their own folly. But do thou, O Jupiter, giver of all blessings, dwelling in the clouds, ruler of the thunder, defend mortals from dismal misfortune; which dispel, O Father, from the soul, and grant it to attain that judgment, trusting to which thou governest all things with justice; that, being honoured, we

may repay thee with honour, singing continually thy works, as becomes a mortal; since there is no greater meed to men or gods, than always to celebrate justly the universal law."

The OMNIPRESENCE or UBIQUITY of God, is another doctrine of Scripture; and it is corroborated by facts obvious to all reflecting beings, though to us, and perhaps to all finite minds, the mode is incomprehensible. The statement of this doctrine in the inspired records, like that of all the other attributes of God, is made in their own peculiar tone and emphasis of majesty and sublimity. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.—Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?—Thus saith the Lord, behold heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.—Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.—Though he dig into hell, thence shall my hand take him; though he climb up into heaven, thence will I bring him down; and though he hide himself in the top of Carmel, I will search and take him out from thence.—In him we live, and move, and have our being.—He filleth all things."

Some striking passages on the ubiquity of the Divine presence may be found in the writings of some of the Greek philosophers, arising out of this notion, that God was the soul of the world; but their very connection with this speculation, notwithstanding the imposing phrase occasionally adopted, strikingly marks the difference between their most exalted views, and those of the Hebrew prophets on this subject. "To a large proportion of those who hold a distinguished rank among the ancient *Theistical* philosophers, the idea of the *personality* of the Deity was in a great measure unknown. The Deity by them was considered, not so much an intelligent being as an *animating* power, diffused throughout the world, and was introduced into their speculative system to account for the motion of that passive mass of matter, which was supposed coeval, and indeed coexistent with himself." (*Sumner's Records of the Creation.*) These defective notions are confessed by Gibbon, a writer not disposed to undervalue their attainments.

"The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man, rather than from that of God. They meditated, however on the Divine nature, as a very curious and important speculation; and in the profound inquiry, they displayed the strength and weakness of the human understanding. Of the four most considerable sects, the Stoics and the Platonicians endeavoured to reconcile the jarring interests of reason and piety. They have left us the most sublime proofs of the

existence and perfections of the First Cause; but as it was impossible for them to conceive the creation of matter, the workman, in the Stoic philosophy, was not sufficiently distinguished from the work; while on the contrary, the spiritual God of Plato and his disciples resembled more an idea than a substance." (*Decline and Fall, &c.*)

Similar errors have been revived in the infidel philosophy of modern time, from Spinoza down to the latter offspring of the German and French schools. The same remark applies also to the oriental philosophy, which, as before remarked, presents at this day a perfect view of the boasted wisdom of ancient Greece, which was "*brought to nought*" by "the foolishness" of apostolic preaching. But in the Scriptures there is nothing confused in the doctrine of the Divine ubiquity. God is every where, but he is not every thing. All things have their being in him, but he is distinct from all things; he fills the universe, but is not mingled with it. He is the intelligence which guides, and the power which sustains, but his personality is preserved, and he is independent of the works of his hands, however vast and noble. So far is his presence from being bounded by the universe itself, that, as in the passage above quoted from the Psalms, we are taught that were it possible for us to wing our way into the immeasurable depths and breadths of space, God would there surround us, in as absolute a sense as that in which he is said to be about our bed and our path in that part of the world where his will has placed us.

On this as on all similar subjects, the Scriptures use terms which are taken in their common sense acceptation among mankind; and though the vanity of the human mind disposes many to seek a philosophy in the doctrine thus announced deeper than that which its popular terms convey, we are bound to conclude, if we would pay but a common respect to an admitted revelation, that where no manifest figure of speech occurs, the truth of the doctrine lies in the tenor of the terms by which it is expressed. Otherwise there would be no revelation, I do not say, of the *modus*, for that is confessedly incomprehensible; but of the fact. In the case before us, the terms *presence*, and *place*, are used according to common notions, and must be so taken, if the Scriptures are intelligible. Metaphysical refinements are not Scriptural doctrines, when they give to the terms chosen by the Holy Spirit an acceptation out of their general and proper use, and make them the signs of a perfectly distinct class of ideas; if indeed all distinctness of idea is not lost in the attempt. It is therefore in the *popular*, and *just* because Scriptural, manner, that we are to conceive of the omnipresence of God.

"If we reflect upon ourselves we may observe that we fill but a small space, and that our knowledge or power reaches but a little way. We can act at one time in one place only, and the sphere of our influence is narrow at largest. Would we be witnesses to what is done at any

distance from us, or exert there our active powers, we must remove ourselves thither. For this reason we are necessarily ignorant of a thousand things which pass around us, incapable of attending and managing any great variety of affairs, or performing at the same time any number of actions, for our own good, or for the benefit of others.

"Although we feel this to be the present condition of our being, and the limited state of our intelligent and active powers, yet we can easily conceive, there may exist beings more perfect, and whose presence may extend far and wide. Any one of whom *present* in, what to us are, *various places*, at the same time, may know at once what is done in all these, and act in all of them; and thus be able to regard and direct a variety of affairs at the same instant. And who farther being qualified, by the purity and activity of their nature, to pass from one place to another with great ease and swiftness, may thus fill a large sphere of action, direct a great variety of affairs, confer a great number of benefits, and observe a multitude of actions at the same time, or in so swift a succession, as to us would appear but one instant. Thus perfect we may easily believe the *angels* of God.

"We can farther conceive this extent of presence, and of ability for knowledge and action, to admit of degrees of ascending perfection approaching to infinite. And when we have thus raised our thoughts to the idea of a being, who is not only present throughout a large empire, but throughout our world; and not only in every part of our world, but in every part of all the numberless suns and worlds which roll in the starry heavens—who is not only able to enliven and actuate the plants, animals, and men who live upon this globe, but countless varieties of creatures every where in an immense universe—yea, whose presence is not confined to the universe, immeasurable as that is by any finite mind, but who is present every where in infinite space; and who is therefore able to create still new worlds and fill them with proper inhabitants, attend, supply, and govern them all—when we have thus gradually raised and enlarged our conceptions, we have the best idea we can form, of the universal presence of the great Jehovah, who filleth heaven and earth. There is no part of the universe, no portion of space uninhabited by God, none wherein this Being of perfect power, wisdom, and benevolence is not essentially present. Could we with the swiftness of a sunbeam dart ourselves beyond the limits of the creation, and for ages continue our progress in infinite space, we should still be surrounded with the Divine presence; nor ever be able to reach that space where God is not.

"His presence also penetrates every part of our world; the most solid parts of the earth cannot exclude it; for it pierces as easily the centre of the globe, as the empty air. All creatures live and move, and have their being in him. And the inmost recesses of the human

heart can no more exclude his presence, or conceal a thought from his knowledge, than the deepest caverns of the earth." (*Amory's Sermons.*)

The illustrations and confirmatory proofs of this doctrine which the material world furnishes, are numerous and striking.

"It is a most evident and acknowledged truth that a being cannot act where it is not; if therefore actions and effects, which manifest the highest wisdom, power, and goodness in the author of them, are continually produced every where, the author of these actions, or God, must be continually present with us, and wherever he thus acts. The matter which composes the world is evidently lifeless and thoughtless; it must therefore be incapable of moving itself, or designing or producing any effects which require wisdom or power. The matter of our world, or the small parts which constitute the air, the earth, and the waters, is yet continually moved, so as to produce effects of this kind; such are the innumerable herbs, and trees, and fruits which adorn the earth, and support the countless millions of creatures who inhabit it. There must therefore be constantly present, all over the earth, a most wise, mighty, and good being, the author and director of these motions.

"We cannot, it is true, see him with our bodily eyes, because he is a pure Spirit; yet this is not any proof that he is not present. A judicious discourse, a series of kind actions, convince us of the presence of a friend, a person of prudence and benevolence. We cannot see the present mind, the seat and principle of these qualities; yet the constant regular motion of the tongue, the hand, and the whole body, (which are the instruments of our souls, as the material universe and all the various bodies in it are the instruments of the Deity,) will not suffer us to doubt, that there is an intelligent and benevolent principle within the body, which produces all these skilful motions and kind actions. The sun, the air, the earth, and the waters, are no more able to move themselves, and produce all that beautiful and useful variety of plants, and fruits, and trees, with which our earth is covered, than the body of a man, when the soul hath left it, is able to move itself, form an instrument, plough a field, or build a house. If the laying out judiciously and well cultivating a small estate, sowing it with proper grain at the best time of the year, watering it in due season and quantities, and gathering in the fruits when ripe, and laying them up in the best manner—if all these effects prove the estate to have a manager, and the manager possessed of skill and strength—certainly the enlightening and warming the whole earth by the sun, and so directing its motion and the motion of the earth as to produce in a constant useful succession day and night summer and winter, seed time and harvest; the watering the earth continually by the clouds, and thus bringing forth immense quantities of herbage, grain, and fruits—certainly all these effects continually produced, must prove that a being of the greatest power, wisdom, and

benevolence, is continually present throughout our world, which he thus supports, moves, actuates, and makes fruitful.

"The fire which warms us, knows nothing of its serviceableness to this purpose, nor of the wise laws according to which its particles are moved to produce this effect. And that it is placed in such a part of the house, where it may be greatly beneficial, and no way hurtful, is ascribed without hesitation to the contrivance and labour of a person who knew its proper place and uses. And if we came daily into a house wherein we saw this was regularly done, though we never saw an inhabitant therein, we could not doubt that the house was occupied by a rational inhabitant. That huge globe of fire in the heavens, which we call the sun, and on the light and influences of which the fertility of our world, and the life and pleasure of all animals depend, knows nothing of its serviceableness to these purposes, nor of the wise laws according to which its beams are dispensed; nor what place or motions were requisite for these beneficial purposes. Yet its beams are darted constantly in infinite numbers, every one according to those well-chosen laws, and its proper place and motion are maintained. Must not then its place be appointed, its motion regulated, and beams darted, by almighty wisdom and goodness; which prevent the sun's ever wandering in the boundless spaces of the heavens, so as to leave us in disconsolate cold and darkness; or coming so near, or emitting his rays in such a manner as to burn us up? Must not the great Being who enlightens and warms us by the sun, his instrument, who raises and sends down the vapours, brings forth and ripens the grain and fruits, and who is thus ever acting around us for our benefit, be always present in the sun, throughout the air, and all over the earth, which he thus moves and actuates?

"This earth is in itself a dead motionless mass, and void of all counsel; yet proper parts of it are continually raised through the small pipes which compose the bodies of plants and trees, and are made to contribute to their growth, to open and shine in blossoms and leaves, and to swell and harden into fruit. Could blind thoughtless particles thus continually keep on their way, through numberless windings, without once blundering, if they were not guided by an unerring hand? Can the most perfect human skill from earth and water form one grain, much more a variety of beautiful and relishing fruits? Must not the directing mind, who does all this constantly, be most wise, mighty, and benevolent? Must not the Being who thus continually exerts his skill and energy around us, for our benefit, be confessed to be always present and concerned for our welfare?

"Can these effects be ascribed to any thing below an all-wise and almighty Cause? And must not this cause be present, wherever he acts? Were God to speak to us every month from heaven, and with a voice

loud as thunder declare, that he observes, provides for, and governs us, this would not be a proof in the judgment of sound reason by many degrees so valid. Since much less wisdom and power are required to form such sounds in the air, than to produce these effects; and to give not merely verbal declarations, but substantial evidences of his presence and care over us." (*Amory's Sermons.*)

"In every part and place of the universe, with which we are acquainted, we perceive the exertion of a power, which we believe mediately or immediately, to proceed from the Deity. For instance: In what part or point of space, that has ever been explored, do we not discover attraction? In what regions do we not find light? In what accessible portion of our globe do we not meet with gravity, magnetism, electricity; together with the properties also and powers of organized substances, of vegetable or of animated nature? Nay, farther, we may ask, What kingdom is there of nature, what corner of space, in which there is any thing that can be examined by us, where we do not fall upon contrivance and design? The only reflection perhaps which arises in our minds from this view of the world around us is, that the laws of nature every where prevail; that they are uniform and universal. But what do we mean by the laws of nature, or by any law? Effects are produced by power, not by laws. A law cannot execute itself. A law refers us to an agent." (*Paley.*)

The usual argument *à priori*, on this attribute of the Divine nature, has been stated as follows: but amidst so much demonstration of a much higher kind, it cannot be of much value.

"The First Cause, the supreme all-perfect mind, as he could not derive his being from any other cause, must be independent of all other, and therefore unlimited. He exists by an absolute necessity of nature; and as all the parts of infinite space are exactly uniform and alike, for the same reason that he exists in any one part, he must exist in all. No reason can be assigned for excluding him from one part, which would not exclude him from all. But that he is present in some parts of space, the evident effects of his wisdom, power, and benevolence continually produced, demonstrate, beyond all rational doubt. He must therefore be alike present every where; and fill infinite space with his infinite being." (*Amory.*)

Among metaphysicians, it has been matter of dispute, whether God is present every where by an infinite extension of his essence. This is the opinion of Newton, Dr. S. Clarke, and their followers; others have objected to this notion, that it might then be said, God is neither in heaven or in earth, but only a part of God in each. The former opinion, however, appears most in harmony with the Scriptures; though the term *extension*, through the inadequacy of language, conveys too material an idea. The objection just stated is wholly grounded on notions taken from

material objects, and is therefore of little weight, because it is not applicable to an immaterial substance. It is best to confess with one who had thought deeply on the subject, "there is an incomprehensibleness in the *manner* of every thing about which no controversy can or ought to be concerned." (8) That we cannot comprehend how God is fully, and completely, and undividedly present every where, need not surprise us, when we reflect that the manner in which our own minds are present with our bodies is as incomprehensible, as the manner in which the supreme mind is present with every thing in the universe.

CHAPTER IV.

Attributes of God.—*Omniscience.*

The omniscience of God is constantly connected in Scripture with his omnipresence, and forms a part of almost every description of that attribute; for as God is a spirit, and therefore intelligent, if he is every where, if nothing can exclude him, not even the most solid bodies, nor the minds of intelligent beings, then are all things "naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." "Where he acts, he is, and where he is, he perceives." "He understands and considers things absolutely, and as they are in their own natures, powers, properties, differences, together with all the circumstances belonging to them." (*Bishop* Wilkins's *Principles.*) "Known unto him are all his works from the beginning of the world," rather απ' αιωνος from all eternity—known, before they were made, in their *possible*, and known, now they are made, in their *actual* existence. "Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.—The darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day.—The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings; he searcheth their hearts, and understandeth every imagination of their thoughts." Nor is this perfect knowledge to be confined to men, or angels; it reaches into the state of the dead, and penetrates the regions of the damned. "Hell, *hades*, is naked before him; and destruction (*the seats of destruction*) hath no covering." No limits at all are to be set to this perfection. "Great is the Lord, *his understanding is* INFINITE."

In Psalm xciv, the knowledge of God is argued from the communica.

(8) Jackson's Existence and Unity, &c.—Vide also Watts's Philosophical Essays, and Law's Inquiry into the Ideas of Space, &c.

tion of it to men. "Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not *hear?* He that formed the eye, shall he not *see?* He that chastiseth the heathen shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he *know?*" This argument is as easy as it is conclusive, obliging all who acknowledge a First Cause to admit his perfect intelligence, or to take refuge in Atheism itself. It fetches not the proof from a distance, but refers us to our bosoms for the constant demonstration that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and that by him actions are weighed.

"We find in ourselves such qualities as thought and intelligence, power and freedom, &c, for which we have the evidence of consciousness as much as for our own existence. Indeed, it is only by our consciousness of these that our existence is known to ourselves. We know likewise that these are perfections, and that to have them is better than to be without them. We find also that they have not been in us from eternity. They must, therefore, have had a beginning and consequently some cause, for the very same reason that a being beginning to exist in time requires a cause. Now this cause, as it must be superior to its effect, must have those perfections in a superior degree; and if it be the first cause, it must have them in an infinite or unlimited degree, since bounds or limitation, without a limiter, would be an effect without a cause."

"If God gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to men of understanding, if he communicates this perfection to his creatures, the inference must be that he himself is possessed of it in a much more eminent degree than they. that his knowledge is deep and intimate, reaching to the very essence of things, theirs but slight and superficial; his clear and distinct, theirs confused and dark; his certain and infallible, theirs doubtful and liable to mistake; his easy and permanent, theirs obtained with much pains, and soon lost again by the defects of memory or age; his universal and extending to all objects, theirs short and narrow, reaching only to some few things, while that which is wanting cannot be numbered; and therefore as the heavens are higher than the earth, so, as the prophet has told us, are his ways above their ways, and his thoughts above their thoughts." (*Tillotson's Sermons.*)

But His understanding is *infinite;* a doctrine which the sacred writers not only authoritatively announce, but confirm by referring to the *wisdom* displayed in his *works.* The only difference between wisdom and knowledge is, that the former always supposes action, and action directed to an end. But wherever there is wisdom, there must be knowledge; and as the wisdom of God in the creation consists in the formation of things which, by themselves, or in combination with others, shall produce certain effects, and that in a variety of operation which is to us boundless, the previous knowledge of the *possible* qualities and effects inevitably

supposes a knowledge which can have no limit. For as creation out of *nothing* argues a power which is *omnipotent*, so the knowledge of the *possibilities* of things which are not, a knowledge which, from the effect, we are sure must exist in God, argues that such a Being must be *omniscient*. For "all things being not only present to him, but also entirely depending upon him, and having received both their being itself, and all their powers and faculties from him, it is manifest that, as he knows all things that are, so he must likewise know all possibilities of things, that is, all effects that can be. For, being himself alone self existent, and having alone given to all things all the powers and faculties they are endued with, it is evident he must of necessity know perfectly what all and each of those powers and faculties, which are derived wholly from himself, can possibly produce: and seeing, at one boundless view, all the possible compositions and divisions, variations and changes, circumstances and dependencies of things; all their possible relations one to another, and their dispositions or fitnesses to certain and respective ends, he must, without possibility of error, know exactly what is best and properest in every one of the infinite possible cases or methods of disposing things: and understand perfectly how to order and direct the respecuve means, to bring about what he so knows to be, in its kind, or in the whole, the best and fittest in the end. This is what we mean by infinite wisdom."

On the subject of the Divine ubiquity and omniscience, many fine sentiments are found, even among pagans; for an intelligent First Cause being in any sense admitted, it was most natural and obvious to ascribe to him a perfect knowledge of all things. They acknowledged "that nothing is hid from God, who is intimate to our minds, and mingles himself with our very thoughts;" (9) nor were they all unaware of the practical tendency of such a doctrine, and of the motive it affords to a cautious and virtuous conduct. (1) But among them it was not held, as by the sacred writers, in connection with other correct views of the Divine nature, which are essential to give to this its full moral effect. Not only on this subject does the manner in which the Scriptures state this doctrine far transcend that of the wisest pagan Theists; but the *moral* of the sentiment is infinitely more comprehensive and impressive. With them it is connected with man's state of trial; with a holy law, all the violations of which, in thought, word, and deed, are both infallibly known, and strictly marked; with promises of grace; and of mild and protecting government, as to all who have sought and found the mercy of God, forgiving their sins and admitting them into his family. The wicked are

(9) Nihil Deo clausum, interest animis nostris, et mediis cogitationibus interenit. Sen. *Epist.*

(1) Quis enim non timeat Deum, omnia pervidentem, et cogitantem, &c Cic. *De Nat. Deor.*

thus reminded that their hearts are *searched*, and their sins *noted*; that the eyes of the Lord are upon their ways; and that their most secret works will be brought to light in the day when *God the witness*, shall become *God the Judge*. In like manner, "the eyes of the Lord are said to be over the righteous;" that such persons are kept by him "who never slumbers nor sleeps;" that he is never "far from them," and that "his eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in their behalf;" that foes, to them invisible, are seen by his eye, and controlled by his arm; and that this great attribute, so appalling to wicked men, affords to them, not only the most influential reason for a perfectly holy temper and conduct, but the strongest motive to trust, and joy, and hope, amidst the changes and afflictions of the present life. *Socrates*, as well as other philosophers, could express themselves well, so long as they expressed themselves *generally*, on this subject. The former could say, "Let your own frame instruct you. Does the mind inhabiting your body dispose and govern it with ease? Ought you not then to conclude, that the universal mind with equal ease actuates and governs universal nature; and that, when you can at once consider the interests of the Athenians at home, in Egypt, and in Sicily, it is not too much for the Divine wisdom to take care of the universe? These reflections will soon convince you that the greatness of the Divine mind is such, as at once to see all things, hear all things, be present every where, and direct all the affairs of the world." These views are just; but they wanted that connection with others relative both to the Divine nature and government, which we see only in the Bible, to render them influential; they neither gave correct moral distinctions nor led to a virtuous practice, no not in *Socrates*, who on some subjects, and especially on the *personality* of the Deity, and his *independence on matter*, raised himself far above the rest of his philosophic brethren, but in moral feeling and practice was as censurable as they. (2)

(2) Several parallels have been at different times drawn, even by Christian divines, between the character of Socrates and Christ, doubtless with the intention of exalting the latter, but yet so as to veil the true character of the former. How great is the disgust one feels at that want of all moral delicacy from which only such comparisons could emanate, when the true character of Socrates comes to be unveiled! On a sermon preached at Cambridge by Dr. Butler, which contains one of these parallels, "the Christian Observer" has the following just remarks:—

"We earnestly request that such of our readers as are sufficiently acquainted with classical literature to institute the examination, would turn to the eleventh chapter of the third book of the Memorabilia of Xenophon, and we are persuaded that they will not think our reprehension of Dr. Butler misplaced The very title of the chapter, we should have thought, would have precluded any Christian scholar, much more any Christian divine, from the possibility of being guilty of a profanation so gross and revolting. The title of it is *Cum Meretrice Theodata*

The foreknowledge of God, or his prescience of future things, though contingent, is by divines generally included in the term omniscience, and for this they have unquestionably the authority of the Holy Scriptures. From the difficulty which has been supposed to exist, in reconciling this with the freedom of human actions, and man's accountability, some have however refused to allow *prescience*, at least of contingent actions, to be a property of the Divine nature; and others have adopted various modifications of opinion, as to the knowledge of God, in order to elude, or to remove the objection. This subject was glanced at in part i, chap. 9, but in this place, where the omniscience of God is under consideration, the three leading theories, which have been resorted to for the purpose of maintaining unimpugned the moral government of God, and the freedom and responsibility of man seem to require examination, that the true doctrine of Scripture may be fully brought out and established. (3)

de arte hominum alliciendorum disserit, (Socrates, viz.) Doubtless many who heard Dr. Butler preach, and many more who have since read his sermon, have taken it for granted, that when he ventured to recommend the conduct of Socrates, in associating with courtezans, as being an adumbration with that of our Saviour, he must have alluded to instances in the life of that philosopher of his having laboured to reclaim the vicious, or to console the penitent with the hope of pardon. For ourselves, we know of no such instances But what will be his surprise to find that the intercourse of Socrates with courtezans, as it is here recorded by Xenophon, was of the most licentious and profligate description?"

(3) There is another theory which was formerly much debated, under the name of *Scientia Media;* but to which, in the present day, reference is seldom made. The knowledge of God was distributed into *Necessary*, which goes before every act of the will in the order of nature, and by which he knows himself, and all possible things:—*Free*, which follows the act of the will, and by which God knows all things which he has decreed to do and to permit, as things which he wills to be done or permitted:—*Middle*, so called because partaking of the two former kinds, by which he knows, *sub conditione*, what men and angels would voluntarily do under any given circumstances. "Tertiam *Mediam*, qua sub conditione novit quid homines aut angeli facturi essent pro sua libertate, si cum his aut illis circumstantiis, in hoc vel in illo rerum ordine constituerentur."—Episcopius *De Scientia Dei*. They illustrate this kind of knowledge by such passages as, "Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for *if* the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." This distinction, which was taken from the Jesuits, who drew it from the schoolmen, was at least favoured by some of the remonstrant divines, as the extract from Episcopius shows; and they seem to have been led to it by the circumstance that almost all the high Calvinist theologians of that day entirely denied the possibility of contingent future actions being foreknown, in order to support on this ground their doctrine of absolute predestination. In this, however, those remonstrants, who adopted that notion, did not follow their great leader Arminius, who felt no need of this subterfuge, but stood on the plain declarations of Scripture, unembarrassed with metaphysical distinctions. Gomarus, on the other side, adopted this opinion, which was confined, among the Calvinists of that day, to himself and another. Gomarus betook himself to this notion of conditional prescience, in order to avoid being charged

The Chevalier Ramsay, among his other speculations, holds "it a matter of choice in God, to think of finite ideas;" and similar opinions, though variously worded, have been occasionally adopted. In substance these opinions are, that though the knowledge of God be infinite, as his power is infinite, there is no more reason to conclude that his knowledge should be always exerted to the full extent of its capacity, than that his power should be employed to the extent of his omnipotence; and that if we suppose him to *choose* not to know some contingencies, the infiniteness of his knowledge is not thereby impugned. To this it may be answered, "that the infinite power of God is in Scripture represented, as in the nature of things it must be, as an infinite *capacity*, and not as infinite in act; but that the *knowledge* of God is on the contrary never represented there to us as a capacity to acquire knowledge, but as *actually* comprehending all things that are, and all things that can be. 2. That the notion of God's choosing to know some things, and not to know others, supposes a *reason* why he refuses to know any class of things or events, which reason, it would seem, can only arise out of their nature and circumstances, and therefore supposes at least a partial knowledge of them, from which the reason for his not choosing to know them arises. The doctrine is therefore somewhat contradictory. But 3, it is fatal to this opinion, that it does not at all meet the difficulty arising out of the question of the congruity of Divine prescience, and the free actions of man; since some contingent actions, for which men have been made accountable, we are sure have been *foreknown* by God,

with making God the author of the sin of Adam, and found it a convenient mode of eluding so formidable an objection, as Curcellæus remarks: "Sapienter ergo, meo judicio, Gomarus, cum suam de reprobationis objecto sententiam hoc absurdo videret urgeri, quod Deum peccati Adami auctorem constituerit, ad præscientiam conditionatam confugit, *qua Deus ex infinito scientiæ suæ lumine, quædam futura non absolute, sed certa conditione posita prænovit.* Hac enim ratione commodissime ictum istum declinavit.—Eumque postea secutus est Wallæus in Locis suis Communibus; qui etiam feliciter scopulum illum prætervehitur.—Nullum præterea ex Calvini discipulis novi, qui hanc in Deo scientiam agnoscat. —*De Jure Dei.*

To what practical end this opinion went, it is not easy to see either as to such of the Calvinists or of the Arminians as adopted it. The point of the question, after all, was, whether the *actual* circumstances in which a free agent would be placed, and his conduct accordingly, could *both* be foreknown. Gomarus, who adopted the view of *conditional* foreknowledge, as to Adam at least, conceded the liberty of the will, so far as the first man was concerned, to his opponents, but Episcopius and others conceded by this notion something of more importance to the supralapsarians, who denied that the prescience of future contingencies was at all possible. However both agreed to destroy the prescience of God as to *actual* contingencies, though the advocates of the *Media Scientia* reserved the point as to *possible*, or rather *hypothetic* ones, and thus the whole was, after all resolved into the wider question, Is the knowledge of future contingencies possible? This point will be presently considered.

because by his Spirit in the prophets they were *foretold*; and if the freedom of man can in these cases be reconciled to the prescience of God, there is no greater difficulty in any other case which can possibly occur.

A second theory is, that the foreknowledge of contingent events, being in its own nature impossible, because it implies a contradiction, it does no dishonour to the Divine Being to affirm, that of such events he has, and can have no prescience whatever; and thus the prescience of God, as to moral actions being wholly denied, the difficulty of reconciling it with human freedom and accountability has no existence. (4)

To this the same answer must be given as to the former. It does not meet the case, so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain prophecies of rewardable and punishable actions.

That man is accountable to God for his conduct, and therefore free, that is, laid under no invincible necessity of acting in a given manner, are doctrines clearly contained in the Bible, and the notion of necessity has here its full and satisfactory reply; but if a difficulty should be felt in reconciling the freedom of an action with the prescience of it, it affords not the slightest relief to deny the foreknowledge of God as to actions in general, while the Scriptures contain predictions of the conduct of men whose actions cannot have been determined by invincible necessity, because they were actions for which they received from God a just and marked punishment. Whether the scheme of relief be, that the knowledge of God, like his power, is arbitrary; or that the prescience of contingencies is impossible; so long as the Scriptures are allowed to contain predictions of the conduct of men, good or bad, the difficulty remains in all its force. The whole body of prophecy is founded on the certain prescience of contingent actions, or it is not prediction, but guess and conjecture—to such fearful results does the denial of the Divine prescience lead! No one can deny that the Bible contains predictions of the rise and fall of several kingdoms; that Daniel, for instance, prophesied of the rise, the various fortune, and the fall of the celebrated monarchies of antiquity. But empires do not rise and fall wholly by immediate acts of God; they are not thrown up like new islands in the ocean, they do not fall like cities in an earthquake, by the direct exertion of Divine power. They are carried through their various stages of advance and decline, by the virtues and the vices of men, which God makes the instruments of their prosperity or destruction. Counsels, wars, science, revolutions, all crowd in their agency; and the predictions are of the combined and ultimate results of all these circumstances, which, as arising out of the vices and virtues of men, out of innu-

(4) So little effect has this theory in removing any difficulty, that persons of the most opposite theological sentiments have claimed it in their favour.—Socinus and his followers,—all the supralapsarian Calvinists,—and a few Arminians.

merable acts of choice, are *contingent*. Seen they must have been through all their stages, and seen in their results, for prophecy has registered those results. The prescience of them cannot be denied, for that is on the record; and if certain prescience involves necessity, then are the daily virtues and vices of men not contingent. It was predicted that Babylon should be taken by Cyrus in the midst of a midnight revel in which the gates should be left unguarded and open. Now, if all the actions which arose out of the warlike disposition and ambition of Cyrus were contingent, what becomes of the principle, that it is impossible to foreknow contingencies?—they were foreknown, because the result of them was predicted. If the midnight revel of the Babylonian monarch was contingent, (the circumstance which led to the neglect of the gates of the city,) that also was foreknown, because predicted; if not contingent, the actions of both monarchs were necessary, and to neither of them can be ascribed virtue or vice.

Our Lord predicts, most circumstantially, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. If this be allowed, then the contingencies involved in the conduct of the Jews who provoked that fatal war—in the Roman senate who decreed it—in the Roman generals who carried it on—in the Roman and Jewish soldiers who were engaged in it—were all *foreseen*, and the result of them *predicted:* if they were not contingencies, that is, if they were not free actions, then the virtues and vices of both parties, and all the acts of skill, and courage, and enterprise; and all the cruelties and sufferings of the besieged and the besiegers, arising out of innumerable volitions, and giving rise to the events so circumstantially marked in the prophecy, were determined by an irreversible necessity. The 53d chapter of Isaiah predicts, that Messiah should be taken away by a violent death, inflicted by men in defiance of all the principles of justice. The record cannot be blotted out; and if the conduct of the Jews was not, as the advocates of this scheme will contend it was not, influenced by necessity, then we have all the contingencies of their hatred, and cruelties, and injustice *predicted*, and therefore *foreknown*. The same observations might be applied to St. Paul's prediction of a "falling away," in the Church; of the rise of the "man of sin;" and, in a word, to every prediction which the sacred volume contains. If there be any predictions in the Bible at all, every scheme which denies the prescience of contingencies must compel us into the doctrine of necessity, which in this place it is not necessary to discuss.

On the main principle of the theory just mentioned, that the prescience of contingent events is impossible, because their nature would be destroyed by it, we may add a few remarks. That the subject is incomprehensible as to the *manner* in which the Divine Being foreknows future events of this or of any kind, even the greatest minds, which

nave applied themselves to such speculations, have felt and acknowledged. The fact, that such a property exists in the Divine nature is, however, too clearly stated in Scripture to allow of any doubt in those who are disposed to submit to its authority; and it is not left to the uncertainty of our speculations on the properties of spiritual natures, either to be confirmed or disproved. Equally clear is it that the moral actions of men are not necessitated, because human accountability is the main pillar of that moral government, whose principles, conduct, and ends, are stated so largely in Divine revelation. Whatever, therefore, becomes of human speculations, these points are sufficiently settled on an authority which is abundantly sufficient. To the objection of metaphysicians of different classes, against either of these principles, that such is not the sense of the Scriptures, because the fact "*cannot be so, it involves a contradiction*," not the least importance is to be attached, when the plain, concurrent, and uniform sense of Scripture, interpreted as any other book would be interpreted, determines to the contrary. It surely does not follow that a thing cannot be, because *men* do not see, or pretend not to see, that it *can be*. This would lay the foundation of our faith in the strength or weakness of other men's intellect. We are not, however, in many cases, left wholly to this answer, and it may be shown that the position, that *certain* prescience destroys *contingency*, is a mere sophism, and that this conclusion is connected with the premise, by a confused use of terms.

The great fallacy in the argument, that the certain prescience of a moral action destroys its contingent nature, lies in supposing that *contingency* and *certainty* are the opposites of each other. It is, perhaps, unfortunate, that a word which is of figurative etymology, and which consequently can only have an ideal application to such subjects, should have grown into common use in this discussion, because it is more liable on that account to present itself to different minds under different shades of meaning. If, however, the term *contingent* in this controversy has any definite meaning at all, as applied to the moral actions of men, it must mean their *freedom*, and stands opposed not to *certainty*, but to *necessity*. A free action is a voluntary one; and an action which results from the choice of the agent, is distinguished from a necessary one in this, that it might not have been, or have been otherwise, according to the self-determining power of the agent. It is with reference to this specific quality of a free action, that the term contingency is used, —*it might have been otherwise*, in other words, it was not necessitated. Contingency in moral actions is, therefore, their *freedom*, and is opposed, not to *certainty*, but to *necessity*. The very nature of this controversy fixes this as the precise meaning of the term. The question is not, in point of fact, about the *certainty* of moral actions. that is, whether they *will* happen or not; but about the nature of them, whether free or con-

strained, whether they *must* happen or not. Those who advocate this theory care not about the *certainty* (5) of actions, simply considered, that is, whether they will take place or not; the reason why they object to a certain prescience of moral actions is, that they conclude, that such a prescience renders them *necessary*. It is the *quality* of the action for which they contend, not whether it will happen or not. If contingency meant *uncertainty*, the sense in which such theorists take it, the dispute would be at an end. But though an *uncertain* action cannot be foreseen as certain, a free, unnecessitated action may; for there is nothing in the knowledge of the action, in the least, to affect its nature. Simple knowledge is, in no sense, a cause of action, nor can it be conceived to be causal, unconnected with *exerted* power; for mere knowledge, therefore, an action remains free or necessitated, as the case may be. A necessitated action is not made a voluntary one by its being foreknown: a free action is not made a necessary one. Free actions foreknown will not, therefore, cease to be contingent. But how stands the case as to their *certainty?* Precisely on the same ground. The certainty of a *necessary* action foreknown, does not result from the knowledge of the action, but from the operation of the necessitating cause; and in like manner, the certainty of a *free* action does not result from the knowledge of it, which is no cause at all, but from the voluntary cause, that is, the determination of the will. It alters not the case in the least, to say that the voluntary action might have been otherwise. Had it been otherwise, the knowledge of it would have been otherwise; but as the will, which gives birth to the action, is not dependent upon the previous knowledge of God, but the knowledge of the action upon foresight of the choice of the will, neither the will nor the act is controlled by the knowledge, and the action, though foreseen, is still free or contingent.

The foreknowledge of God has then no influence upon either the freedom or the certainty of actions, for this plain reason, that it is *knowledge*, and not *influence;* and actions may be certainly foreknown, without their being rendered necessary by that foreknowledge. But here it is said, If the result of an absolute contingency be certainly foreknown, it *can* have no other result, it *cannot* happen otherwise. This is not the true inference. It *will* not happen otherwise; but I ask, why *can* it not happen otherwise? *Can* is an expression of potentiality, it denotes power or possibility. The objection is, that it is not possible that the action should otherwise happen. But why not? What deprives it of that power? If a necessary action were in question, it could not otherwise happen than as the necessitating cause shall compel; but then that

(5) *Certainty* is, properly speaking, no quality of an action at all, unless it be taken in the sense of a *fixed* and *necessitated* action; in this controversy it means the *certainty* which the mind that foresees has, that an action will be done, and the certainty is therefore in the mind, and not in the action.

would arise from the necessitating cause solely and not from the prescience of the action, which is not causal. But if the action be free, and it enter into the very nature of a voluntary action to be unconstrained, then it might have happened in a thousand other ways or not have happened at all; the foreknowledge of it no more affects its nature in this case than in the other. All its potentiality, so to speak, still remains, independent of foreknowledge, which neither adds to its power of happening otherwise, nor diminishes it. But then we are told, that the prescience of it, in that case, must be uncertain: not unless any person can prove, that the Divine prescience is unable to dart through all the workings of the human mind, all its comparison of things in the judgment, all the influences of motives on the affections, all the hesitancies, and haltings of the will, to its final choice. "*Such knowledge is too wonderful for us*," but it is the knowledge of Him who "understandeth the thoughts of man afar off."

But if a contingency *will* have a given result, to that result it *must* be determined. Not in the least. We have seen that it cannot be determined to a given result by mere precognition, for we have evidence in our own minds that mere knowledge is not *causal* to the actions of another. It is determined to its result by the will of the agent; but even in that case, it cannot be said, that it *must* be determined to that result, because it is of the nature of freedom to be unconstrained; so that here we have an instance in the case of a free agent that he *will* act in some particular manner, but that it by no means follows from what *will* be, whether foreseen or not, that it *must* be.

On this subject, so much controverted, and on which so much, in the way of logical consequence, depends, I add a few authorities.

Dr. S. Clarke observes, "They who suppose that events, which are called contingent, cannot be certainly foreknown, must likewise suppose that when there is not a chain of necessary causes, there can be no certainty of any future events; but this is a mistake, for let us suppose that there is in man a power of beginning motion, and of acting with what has, of late, been called philosophical freedom; and let us suppose farther, that the actions of such a man cannot possibly be foreknown; will there not yet be in the nature of things, notwithstanding this supposition, the same certainty of event in every one of the man's actions, as if they were ever so fatal and necessary? For instance, suppose the man, by an internal principle of motion, and an absolute freedom of mind, to do some particular action *to-day*, and suppose it was not possible that this action should have been foreseen *yesterday*, was there not, nevertheless, the same certainty of event, as if it had been foreseen, and absolutely necessary? That is, would it not have been as certain a truth yesterday, and from eternity, that this action was an event to be performed to-day, notwithstanding the supposed freedom, as

it is now a certain and infallible truth that it is performed? Mere certainty of event, therefore, does not, in any measure, imply necessity. And surely it implies no contradiction to suppose, that every future event which, in the nature of things, is now certain, may now be certainly known by that intelligence which is omniscient. The manner how God can foreknow future events, without a chain of necessary causes, it is indeed impossible for us to explain, yet some sort of general notion of it we may conceive. For, as a man who has no influence over another person's actions, can yet often perceive beforehand what that other will do; and a wiser and more experienced man, with still greater probability will foresee what another, with whose disposition he is perfectly acquainted, will in certain circumstances do; and an angel, with still less degree of error, may have a farther prospect into men's future actions: so it is very reasonable to conceive, that God, without influencing men's wills by his power, or subjecting them to a chain of necessary causes, cannot but have a knowledge of future free events, as much more certain than men or angels can possibly have, as the perfection of his nature is greater than that of theirs. The distinct manner how he foresees these things, we cannot, indeed, explain; but neither can we explain the manner of numberless other things, of the reality of which, however, no man entertains a doubt."

Dr. Copleston judiciously remarks:—

"The course indeed of the *material* world seems to proceed upon such fixed and uniform laws, that short experience joined to close attention is sufficient to enable a man, for all useful purposes, to anticipate the general result of causes now in action. In the *moral* world much greater uncertainty exists. Every one feels, that what depends upon the conduct of his fellow creatures is less certain, than what is to be brought about by the agency of the laws of matter: and yet even here, since man is a being of a certain composition, having such and such faculties, inclinations, affections, desires, and appetites, it is very possible for those who study his nature attentively, especially for those who have practical experience of any individual or of any community of men, to foretell how they will be affected, and how they will act under any supposed circumstances. The same power (in an unlimited degree as before) it is natural and reasonable to ascribe to that Being, who excels the wisest of us infinitely more than the wisest of us excels his fellow creatures.

"It never enters the mind of a person who reflects in this way, that his anticipation of another's conduct lays any restraint upon that man's conduct when he comes to act. *The anticipation indeed is relative to himself, not to the other.* If it affected *him* in the remotest degree, his conduct would vary in proportion to the strength of the conviction in the mind of the thinker that he will so act. But no man really believes in

this magical sympathy. No man supposes the *certainty* of the *event* (to use a common, but, as I conceive, an improper term,) to correspond at all with the *certainty of him* who foretells or expects it. In fact, every day's experience shows, that men are deceived in the event, even when they regarded themselves as most certain, and when they would readily have used the strongest phrases to denote that certainty, not from any intention to deceive, but from an honest persuasion that such an event must happen. How is it then? God can never be deceived—his knowledge therefore is always accompanied or followed by the event—and yet if we get an idea of what *his* knowledge is, by our own, why should we regard it as dragging the event along with it, when in our own case we acknowledge the two things to have no connection?

"But here the advocate for necessity interposes, and says, True, *your* knowledge does not affect the event, over which you have no power: but God, who is all-powerful, who *made* all things as they are, and who *knows* all that will come to pass, must be regarded as rendering that *necessary* which he foreknows—just as even you may be considered accessary to the event which you anticipate, exactly in proportion to the share you have had in preparing the instruments or forming the minds of those who are to bring it about.

"To this I answer, that the connection between *knowledge* and the *event* is not at all established by this argument. It is not because I *knew* what would follow, but because I *contributed toward it*, that it is influenced by me. You may if you please contend, that because God made every thing, therefore all things that happen are done by him. This is taking another ground, for the doctrine of necessity, which will be considered presently. All I maintain now is, that the notion of God's *foreknowledge* ought not to interfere in the slightest degree with our belief in the *contingency* of events, and the *freedom* of human actions. The confusion has, I conceive, arisen chiefly from the ambiguity of the word *certainty*, used as it is even by learned writers, both in its relation to the mind which thinks, and to the object about which it is thinking." (*Inquiry into Necessity, &c.*)

To the above I add a passage from a divine of much older date, who has stated the argument with admirable clearness:—

In answer to the common argument, "As a thing is, such is the knowledge of it: future contingencies are uncertain, therefore they cannot be known as certain," he observes, "It is wonderful, that acute minds should not have detected the fallacy of this paralogism. For the *major*, which is vaunted as an axiom of undoubted truth, is most false unless it be properly explained. For if a thing is *evil*, shall the knowledge of it be *evil*? Then neither God nor angels could know the sins of men, without sinning themselves! Again, should a thing be *necessary*, will the knowledge of it, on that account, be also *necessary*? But

many things are necessary in the nature of things, which either are unknown to us, or only known doubtfully. Many persons doubt even the existence of God, which in the highest sense is *necessary*, so far are they from having a *necessary* knowledge of him. That proposition, therefore, is only true in this sense, that our knowledge must agree with the things which are known, and that we know them as they are in reality, and not otherwise. Thus I ought to think, that the paper on which I write is white and the ink black; for if I fancy the ink white, and the paper black, this is not knowledge, but ignorance, or rather deception. In like manner true knowledge ought to regard things *necessary* as *necessary*, and things *contingent* as *contingent:* but it requires not that necessary things should be known necessarily, and contingent things contingently; for the contrary often happens.

"But the *minor* of the above syllogism is ambiguous and improper. The things about which our minds are exercised, are in themselves neither *certain* nor *uncertain*. They are called so only in respect of him who knows them; but they themselves are *necessary* or *contingent*. But if you understand by a *certain* thing, a *necessary* one, and by an *uncertain* thing that which is *contingent*, as many by an abuse of terms do, then your *minor* will appear to be identical and nugatory, for it will stand, 'Future contingencies are contingent,' from which no conclusion can be drawn. It is to be concluded, that certitude and incertitude are not affections of the things which are or may be known, but of the intellect of him who has knowledge of them, and who forms different judgments respecting them. For one and the same thing, without any change in itself, may be certain and uncertain at the same time; *certain* indeed to him who knows it certainly, but to him who knows it not, *uncertain*. For example, the same future eclipse of the sun shall be certain to a skilful astronomer who has calculated it: uncertain to him who is ignorant of the laws of the heavenly bodies. But that cannot be said concerning the necessity and contingency of things. They remain such as they are in their own nature, whether we know them or not; for an eclipse, which from the laws of nature must necessarily take place, is not made contingent by my ignorance and uncertainty whether it will or will not happen. For this reason they are mistaken who say that things determined by the decree of God, are necessary in respect of God; but that to us, who know not his decrees, they are contingent; for our ignorance cannot make that which is future and necessary, because God hath decreed it, change its nature, and become contingent. It is no contradiction indeed to say, that one and the same thing may be at once *necessary* and yet *uncertain*, but that it should be *necessary* and *contingent* is a manifest contradiction. To God, therefore, whose knowledge is infinite, future contingencies are indeed certain, but to angels and men uncertain; nor are they made necessary because God knows them cer-

tainly. The knowledge of God influences nothing extrinsically, nor changes the nature of things in any wise. He knows future necessary things as necessary, but contingencies as contingencies; otherwise he would not know them truly, but be deceived, which cannot happen to God." (*Curcellæus, De Jure Dei*, 1645.)

The rudiments of the third theory which this controversy has called forth, may be found in many theological writers, ancient and modern; but it is stated at large in the writings of Archbishop King, and requires some notice, because the views of that writer have of late been again made a subject of controversy. They amount, in brief, to this, that the foreknowledge of God must be supposed to differ so much from any thing of the kind we perceive in ourselves, and from any ideas which we can possibly form of that property of the Divine nature, that no argument respecting it can be grounded upon our imperfect notions; and that all controversy on subjects connected with it is idle and fruitless.

In establishing this view, Archbishop King, in his Sermon on Divine Predestination and Foreknowledge, has the following observations:—

"It is in effect agreed on all hands, that the nature of God is incomprehensible by human understanding; and not only his nature, but likewise his powers and faculties, and the ways and methods in which he exercises them, are so far beyond our reach, that we are utterly incapable of framing exact and adequate notions of them.

"We ought to remember, that the descriptions which we frame to ourselves of God, or of the Divine attributes, are not taken from any direct or immediate perceptions that we have of him or them; but from some observations we have made of his works, and from the consideration of those qualifications, that we conceive would enable us to perform the like.

"It doth truly follow from hence, that God must either have these, or other faculties equivalent to them, and adequate to these mighty effects which proceed from them. And because we do not know what his faculties are in themselves, we give them the names of those powers, that we find would be necessary to us in order to produce such effects, and call them wisdom, understanding, and foreknowledge; yet at the same time we cannot but be sensible, *that they are of a nature altogether different from ours, and that we have no direct and proper notion or conception of them.* Only we are sure, that they have effects like unto those that proceed from wisdom, understanding, and foreknowledge in us; and that when our works fail to resemble them in any particular, it is by reason of some defect in these qualifications.

"Thus our reason teaches us to ascribe these attributes to God, by way of analogy to such qualities as we find most valuable in ourselves.

"If we look into the Holy Scriptures, and consider the representations given us there of God or his attributes, we shall find them plainly bor-

nowed from some resemblance to things, with which we are acquainted by our senses. Thus when the Holy Scriptures speak of God, they ascribe hands, and eyes, and feet to him: not that we should believe he has any of these members, according to the literal signification; but the meaning is, that he has a power to execute all those acts, to the effecting of which these parts in us are instrumental: that is, he can converse with men, as well as if he had a tongue and mouth; he can discern all that we do or say, as perfectly as if he had eyes and ears; he can reach us as well as if he had hands and feet; he has as true and substantial a being as if he had a body; and he is as truly present every where, as if that body were infinitely extended.

"After the same manner, we find him represented as affected with such passions as we perceive to be in ourselves, namely, as angry and pleased, as loving and hating, as repenting and changing his resolutions, as full of mercy and provoked to revenge. And yet on reflection we cannot think, that any of these passions literally affect the Divine nature.

"And as the passions of men are thus by analogy ascribed to God, because these would in us be the principles of such outward actions, as we see he has performed; so by the same condescension to the weakness of our capacities, we find the powers and operations of our minds ascribed to him.

"The use of foreknowledge with us is to prevent any surprise when events happen, and that we may not be at a loss what to do by things coming upon us unawares. Now inasmuch as we are certain that nothing can surprise God, and that he can never be at a loss what to do; we conclude that God has a faculty to which our foreknowledge bears some analogy, therefore we call it by that name.

"But it does not follow from hence that any of these are *literally* in God, after the manner they are in us, any more than hands or eyes, than love or hatred are; on the contrary we must acknowledge, that those things, which we call by these names, when attributed to God, are of so very different *a nature* from what they are in us, and so superior to all that we can conceive, that in reality there is no more likeness between them, *than between our hand and God's power*. Nor can we draw consequences from the real nature of one to that of the other, with more justness of reason, than we can conclude, because our hand consists of fingers and joints, therefore the power of God is distinguished by such parts.

"So that to argue, 'because foreknowledge, as it is in us, if supposed infallible, cannot consist with the contingency of events, therefore what we call so in God cannot,' is as far from reason, as it would be to conclude, because our eyes cannot see in the dark, therefore when God is said to see all things, his eyes must be enlightened with a perpetual sunshine; or because we cannot love or hate without passion, therefore

when the Scriptures ascribe these to God, they teach us that he is liable to these affections as we are.

"We ought, therefore, to interpret all these things, when attributed to God only by way of condescension to our capacities, in order to help us to conceive what we are to expect from him, and what duty we are to pay him. Particularly, the terms of foreknowledge, predestination, nay, of understanding and will, when ascribed to him, are not to be taken strictly or properly, nor are we to think that they are in him in the *same sense* that we find them in ourselves; on the contrary, we are to interpret them only by way of analogy and comparison."

These views have recently been advocated by Dr. Copleston, in his "Inquiry into the Doctrines of *Necessity* and *Predestination*;" but, to this theory, the first objection is, that, like the former, it does not in the least relieve the difficulty, for the entire subduing of which it was adopted.

For though foreknowledge in God should be admitted to be something of a "very different nature" to the same quality in man, yet as it is represented as something *equivalent* to foreknowledge, whatever that *something* may be; as, in consequence of it, prophecies have actually been uttered and fulfilled, and of such a kind, too, as relate to actions for which men have in fact been held accountable; all the original difficulty of reconciling contingent events to this *something*, of which human foreknowledge is a "kind of shadow," as "a map of China is to China itself," remains in full force. The difficulty is shifted, but not removed; it cannot even be with more facility slided past; and either the Christian world must be content to forego all inquiries into these subjects,—a consummation not to be expected, however it may be wished,—or the contest must be resumed on another field, with no advantage from better ground or from broader daylight.

A farther objection to these notions is, that they are dangerous.

For if it be true, that the faculties we ascribe to God are "*of a nature* altogether different *from our own, and that we have no* direct *and* proper *notion or conception of them*," then, in point of fact, we have no proper revelation at all of the nature of God, and of his attributes, in the Scriptures; and what we esteem to be such, is a revelation of *terms*, to which we can attach no "*proper notion*." If this conclusion be well founded, then it is so monstrous that the premises on which it hangs must be unsound and anti-Scriptural. This alone is a sufficient *general* refutation of the hypothesis: but a more particular examination will show that it rests upon false assumptions; and that it introduces gratuitous difficulties, not called for by the supposed difficulty of reconciling the foreknowledge of God with the freedom of human actions.

1. It is assumed that the descriptions which we frame to ourselves of God, are taken from the observations we have made on his works, and from the consciousness of those qualifications which, we conceive,

would enable us to perform the like. This might be, in part, true of heathens left without the light of revelation; but it is not true of those who enjoy that advantage. Our knowledge of God comes from the Scriptures, which are taught to us in our infancy, and with which, either by reading or hearing, we become familiar as we grow up. The notions we have of God, so far as they agree with the Scriptures, are, therefore, not those which we have framed by the *process* assumed by the archbishop, but those which have been *declared* to us in the Scriptures by God himself, as descriptions of his own nature. This makes a great difference. Our own modes of forming conceptions of the Divine nature would have no authority higher than ourselves; the *announcements* of Scripture are the word of God, communicating by human language the *truth* and *reality* of things, as to *himself*. This is the constant profession of the sacred writers; they tell us, not what there is in man which may support an analogy between man and God, but what God is in himself.

2. It is assumed, that because the nature of God is "*incomprehensible*," we have no "*proper* notion or conception of it." The term "proper notion" is vague. It may mean "an *exact* and *adequate* notion," which it may be granted without hesitation that we have not; or it may mean a notion *correct* and *true* in itself, though not *complete* and *comprehensive*. A great part of the fallacy lies here. To be *incomprehensible*, is not, in every case, and assuredly not in this, to be *unintelligible*. We may *know* God, though we cannot *fully* know him; and our notions may be *true*, though not *adequate*; and they must be true, if we have rightly understood God's revelation of himself. Of *being*, for instance, we can form a true notion, because we are conscious of our own existence; and though we cannot extend the conception to *absolute* being or self existence, because our being is a dependent one, we can yet supply the defect, as we are taught by the Scriptures, by the negative notion of *independence*. Of *spirit* we have a true notion, and understand, therefore, what is meant, when it is said, that "God is a spirit;" and though we can have but an imperfect conception of an *infinite* spirit, we can supply that want also, to all practical purposes, by the negative process of removing all *imperfection*, or *limit* of excellence, from our views of the Divine nature. We have a *true* notion of the *presence* of one being with other beings, and with place; and though we cannot *comprehend* the mode in which God is *omnipresent*, we are able to conceive without difficulty the *fact*, that the Divine presence fills all things. We have true notions of *power* and *knowledge*; and can suppose them infinite, though *how* they should be so, we know not. And as to the *moral* attributes, such as *truth*, *justice*, and *goodness*, we have not only *true*, but comprehensive, and for any thing that appears to the contrary, *adequate* notions of them; for our difficulties

as to these attributes do not arise from any incapacity to conceive of what is *perfect truth*, *perfect justice*, and *perfect goodness*, but from our inability to show how many things, which occur in the Divine government, are to be reconciled to these attributes;—and that, not because our notions of the attributes themselves are obscure, but because the things, out of which such questions arise, are either in themselves, or in their relations, but partially understood or greatly mistaken.—Job and his friends did not differ in abstract views of the *justice* of the moral government of God, but in reconciling Job's afflictions with it.

3. It is assumed that the nature of God is *essentially* different from the spiritual nature of man. This is not the doctrine of Scripture.—When it says, that "God is a *spirit*;" we have no reason to conclude that a distant analogy, such a one as springs out of mere *relation*, which, in a poetic imagination, might be sufficient to support a figure of speech, is alone intended. The very argument connected with these words, in the discourse of our Lord with the woman of Samaria, forbids this. It is a declaration of the *nature* of God, and of the worship suited to his *nature*; and the word employed is that by which both Jews and Samaritans had been taught by the same inspired records, which they each possessed, to designate and conceive of the intellectual nature of man. The nature of God, and the nature of man, are not the same; but they are *similar*, because they bear many attributes in common, though on the part of the Divine nature in a degree of perfection infinitely exceeding. The difference of degree, however, cannot prove a difference of essence,—no, nor the circumstance that one has attributes which the other has not,—in any sense of the word *difference* which could be of service to the advocates of this hypothesis. But if a total difference is proved as to the *intellectual* attributes of God and men, that difference must be extended to the *moral* attributes also; and so the very foundation of morals and religion would be undermined. This point was successfully pressed by Edwards against Archbishop King, and it is met very feebly by Dr. Copleston. "Edwards," he observes, "raises a clamour about the moral attributes, as if *their* nature also must be held to be different in kind from human virtues, if the *knowledge* of God be admitted to be different in kind from ours." Certainly this follows from the principles laid down by Archbishop King; and if his followers take his conclusions as to the intellectual attributes, they must take them as to the moral attributes also. If the faculties of God be "of a nature altogether different from ours," we have no more reason to except from this rule the *truth* and the *justice*, than the *wisdom* and the *prescience* of God; and the reasoning of Archbishop King is as conclusive in the one case as in the other.

The fallacy of the above *assumptions* is sufficient to destroy the hypo

thesis which has been built upon them; and the argument from Scripture may be shown to be as unfounded. It is, as the above extract will show, in brief this, that as the Scriptures ascribe, by *analogy*, hands, and eyes, and feet to God, and also the passions of love, hatred, anger, &c., "because these would be in us the principles of such outward actions as we see he has performed; so, by the same condescension, to the weakness of our capacities, we find the powers and operations of our *minds* ascribed to him." But will the advocates of this opinion look steadily to its legitimate consequences? We believe not; and those consequences must, therefore, be its total refutation. For if both our *intellectual* and *moral* affections are made use of but as distant analogies, and obscure intimations, to convey to us an imperfect knowledge of the intellectual powers and affections of the Divine nature, in the *same manner* as human hands, and human eyes, are made to represent his power and his knowledge,—it follows that there is nothing in the Divine nature which answers more truly and exactly to *knowledge*, *justice*, *truth*, *mercy*, and other qualities in man, than the knowledge of God answers to human organs of vision, or his power to the hands or the feet; and from this it would follow, that nothing is said in the Scriptures of the Divine Being, but what is, in the highest sense, figurative, and purely metaphorical. We are no more like God in our *minds* than in our *bodies*, and it might as truly have been said with respect to man's *bodily* shape, as to his *mental* faculties, that man was made "in the image of God." (6)

(6) "Though his grace rightly lays down analogy for the foundation of his discourse, yet, for want of having thoroughly weighed and digested it, and by wording himself incautiously, he seems entirely to destroy the nature of it; insomuch that while he rejects the strict *propriety* of our conceptions and words, on the one hand, he appears to his antagonists to run into an extreme even below *metaphor*, on the other.

"His greatest mistake is, that through his discourse he supposes the members and actions of a human body, which we attribute to God in a pure metaphor, to be equally upon the same foot of analogy with the *passions* of a human soul, which are attributed to him in a lower and more imperfect degree of analogy; and even with the *operations* and perfections of the pure mind or *intellect* which are attributed to him in a yet higher and more complete degree. In pursuance of this oversight, he expressly asserts love and anger, wisdom and goodness, knowledge and foreknowledge, and all the other Divine attributes to be spoken of God, as improperly as *eyes* or *ears*; that there is no more likeness between these things in the Divine nature and in ours, than there is between our *hand* and God's *power*, and that they are not to be taken in the same sense.

"Agreeably to this incautious and indistinct manner of treating a subject curious and difficult, he hath unwarily dropped some such shocking expressions as these, *the best representations we can make of God are infinitely short of truth.* Which God forbid, in the sense his adversaries take it; for then all our reasonings concerning him would be groundless and false. But the saying is *evidently*

It is also to be observed, that when the Scriptures speak of the knowledge, power, and other attributes of God, in figurative language, taken from the eyes or hands of the body, it is sufficiently obvious that this language is metaphorical, not only from the reason of things itself, but because the same ideas are also quite as often expressed without figure; and the metaphor therefore never misleads us. We have sufficient proof also that it never did mislead the Jews, even in the worst periods of their history, and when their tendency to idolatry and gross superstition was most powerful. They made images in human shape of other gods; but never of JEHOVAH: the Jews were never anthropomorphites, whatever they might be beside. But it is equally certain, that they did give a *literal* interpretation to those passages in their Scriptures which speak of the *knowledge, justice, mercy,* &c, of God, as the same in *kind*, though infinitely higher in their degree of excellence, with the same qualities in men. The reason is obvious: they could not interpret those passages of their holy writings which speak of the hands, the eyes, and the feet of God *literally;* because every part of the same sacred revelation was full of representations of the Divine nature, which declared his absolute spirituality: and they could not interpret those passages figuratively which speak of the intellectual and moral qualities of God in terms that express the same qualities in men; because their whole revelation did not furnish them with any hint, even the most distant, that there was a more literal or exact sense in which they could be taken. It was not possible for any man to take literally that sublimely figurative representation of the upholding and ruling power of God, where he is said to "hold the waters of the ocean in the hollow of his hand," unless he could also conclude that where he is said to "weigh the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance," he was to understand this literally also. The idea suggested is that of sustaining, regulating, and adjusting power; but if he were told, that he ought to take the idea of power in as figurative a sense as that of the waters being held in the hollow of the hand of God, and his weighing the mountains in scales, he would find it impossible to form any idea of the thing signified at all. The first step in the attempt would plunge him into total darkness. The figurative *hand* assists him

true in a favourable and qualified sense and meaning; namely, that they are infinitely short of the real, true, internal nature of God as he is in himself.—Again, *that they are emblems indeed and parabolical figures of the Divine attributes, which they are designed to signify;* as if they were signs or figures of our own, altogether precarious and arbitrary, and without any real and true foundation of analogy between them in the nature of either God or man: and accordingly he unhappily describes the knowledge we have of God and his attributes, by the notion we form of a strange country by a *map*, which is only *paper* and *ink, strokes* and *lines.*" (*Bishop* BROWN'S *Procedure of Human Understanding.*)

to form the idea of managing and controlling *power*, but the figurative *power* suggests *nothing;* and so this scheme blots out entirely all revelation of God of any kind, by resolving the whole into figures, which represent nothing of which we can form any conception.

The argument of Archbishop King, from the passions which are ascribed to God in Scripture, is not more conclusive. "After the same manner we find him represented as affected with such passions as we perceive to be in ourselves, as angry and pleased, as loving and hating, as repenting and changing his resolutions, as full of mercy, and provoked to revenge; and yet, on reflection, we cannot think that any of these passions literally affect the Divine nature." But why not? As they are represented in Scripture to be affections of the Divine nature, and not in the *gross* manner in which they are expressed in this extract, there seems nothing improper in taking them *literally;* and no necessity is made out to compel us to understand them to signify *somewhat* for which we have not a name, and of which we can form no idea. The Scriptures nowhere warrant us to consider God as a cold metaphysical abstraction; and they nowhere indicate to us that when they ascribe *affections* to him, they are to be taken as mere figures of speech. On the contrary, they teach us to consider them as answering *substantially*, though not *circumstantially* to the innocent affections of men and angels. Why may not anger be "literally" ascribed to God, not indeed as it may be caricatured to suit a theory, but *as* we find it ascribed in the Scriptures? It is not *malignant* anger, nor blind, stormy, and disturbing anger, which is spoken of; nor is this always, nor need it be at any time, the anger of creatures. There is an anger which is without sin in man,—"a perception of evil, and opposition to it, and also an emotion of mind, a sensation, or passion, suitable thereto." (*Wesley.*) There was this in our Lord, who was without *sin;* nor is it represented by the evangelists, who give us the instances, as even an *infirmity* of the nature He assumed. In God it may be allowed to exist in a different *manner* to that in which it is found even in men who are "angry and *sin not;*" it is accompanied with no weakness, it is allied to no imperfection; but that it does exist as *truly* in him as in man, is the doctrine of Scripture; and there is no perfection ascribed to God, to which it can be proved contrary, or with which we cannot conceive it to coexist. (7)

(7) Melancthon says: '*The Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I [Moses] prayed for Aaron also at the same time*, Deut. ix, 20. Let us not elude the exceedingly lamentable expressions which the Holy Ghost employs when he says, *God was very angry;* and let us not feign to ourselves a *God of stone*, or *a Stoical Deity*. For though God is angry in a different manner from men, yet let us conclude that God was really angry with Aaron, and that Aaron was not then in [a state of] grace, but obnoxious to everlasting punishment. Dreadful was the fall of Aaron, who had through fear yielded to the madness of

Not only *anger*, we are told, is ascribed to God, but "the being pleased." Let the term used be *complacency*, instead of one which seems to have been selected to convey a notion of a lower and less worthy kind; and there is no incongruity in the idea. He is the *blessed* or *happy* God, and therefore capable of pleasure. He looked upon his works, and saw that they were "good," "very good,"—words which suggest the idea of his *complacency* upon their completion; and this, when separated from all connection with human infirmity, appears to be a perfection, and not a defect. To be incapable of complacency and delight, is the character of the Supreme Being of EPICURUS and of the modern Hindoos, of whose *internal state*, so to speak, deep sleep, and the surface of an unruffled lake, are favourite figurative representations. But of this refinement we have nothing in the Bible, nor is it in the least necessary to our idea of infinite perfection. And why should not *love* exist in God, in more than a figurative sense? For this affection to be accompanied with perturbation, anxiety, and weak or irrational partiality, is a mere accident. So we often see it in human beings; but though this affection, without any concurrent infirmity, be ascribed to God, it surely does not follow that it exists in him, as something in nature "wholly different" from love in wise and holy creatures, in angels and in saints. Not only the beauty, the force, and the encouragement of a thousand passages of Scripture would be lost, upon this hypothesis; but their *meaning* also. Love in God is *something*, we are told, which is so called, because it produces similar effects to those which are produced by love in man; but what this something is, we are not informed; and the revelation of Scripture as to God, is thus reduced to a revelation of his *acts* only, but not, in the least, of the *principles* from which they flow. (8)

the people when they instituted the Egyptian worship. Being warned by this example, let us not confirm ourselves in security, but acknowledge that it is possible for elect and renewed persons horribly to fall," &c. (*Loci Præcipui Theologi*, 1543.)

(8) "It would destroy the confidence of prayer, and the ardour of devotion, if we could regard the Deity as subsisting by himself, and as having no sympathies, but mere abstract relations to the whole family in heaven and earth; and I look upon it as one of the most rational and philosophical confutations of your system, that it is fitted neither for the theory nor the practice of our religion; and that, if we could adopt it, we must henceforth exchange the language of Scripture for the anthems of Epicurus:—

"Omnis enim per se Divûm natura necesse est,
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,
Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe;
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ.

"It is in direct opposition to all such vain and skeptical speculations, that Chris

The same observations may be applied to "*mercy* and *revenge*," by the latter of which the archbishop can mean nothing more than judicial vengeance, or *retribution*, though an equivocal term has been adopted, *ad captandum*. "Repenting, and changing his resolutions," are improperly placed among the *affections*; but, freed from ideas of human infirmity, they may be, without the least dishonour to the fulness of the Divine perfections, ascribed to God in as *literal* a sense as we find them stated in the Scriptures. They there clearly signify no more than the change which takes place in the *affections* of God, his *anger* or his *love*, as men turn from the practice of righteousness, or repent and turn back again to him; and the consequent changes in his dispensations toward them as their Governor and Lord. This is the Scriptural doctrine, and there is nothing in it which is not most worthy of God, though literally interpreted; nothing which is not consistent with his absolute immutability. He is unchangeably the lover and the rewarder of righteousness, unchangeably the hater and the judge of iniquity; and as his creatures are righteous or wicked, or are changed from the one state to the other, they become the objects of the different *regards*, and of the different *administrations*, of the *same* righteous and gracious Sovereign, who, by these very changes, shows that he is without variableness, or shadow of turning.

If then there is no reason for not attributing even certain affections of the human mind to God, when connected with absolute perfection and excellence, in their nature and in their exercise, no reason certainly can be given for not considering his intellectual attributes, represented, as to their *nature* though not as to their *degree*, by terms taken from the faculties of the human mind, as corresponding with our own. But the matter is placed beyond all doubt by the appeal which is so often made in the Bible to these properties in man, not as illustrations only of something *distantly* and *indistinctly* analogous to properties in the Divine nature, but as representations of the *nature* and *reality* of these qualities in the Supreme Being, and which are, *therefore*, made the *grounds* of *argument*, the *basis* of *duty*, and the *sources* of *consolation*.

With respect to the *nature* of God, it is sufficient to refer to the passage before mentioned,—"God *is a* Spirit;—where the argument is, that he requires not a ceremonial but a spiritual worship, the worship of man's *spirit*; because he himself is a Spirit. How this argument could be brought out on Archbishop King's and Dr. Coplestón's theory, it is difficult to state. It would be something of this kind:—God is a Spirit; that is, he is called a Spirit, because his nature is analogous to the spiritual nature of man: but this analogy implies no similarity of

tianity always represents and speaks of the Deity as participating, so far as infinity and perfection may participate, in those feelings and affections which belong to our rational natures." (Grinfield's *Vindiciæ Analogicæ*.)

nature: it is a mere analogy of relation; and therefore, though we have no *direct* and *proper* notion of the nature of God, yet, because he is *called* a *Spirit*, "they that worship him must worship him in *spirit* and in truth." This is indeed far from being an intelligible, and it is still less a *practical*, argument.

With respect to his *intellectual* attributes, it is argued in Scripture, "He that teacheth man *knowledge*, shall not he *know?*" Here the knowledge of God is supposed to be of the same *nature* as the knowledge of man. This is the sole foundation of the argument; which would have appeared indescribably obscure, if, according to Archbishop King's hypothesis, it had stood,—"He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not have *somewhat* in his nature, which, because it gives rise to actions similar to those which proceed from knowledge, we may call knowledge, but of which we have no *direct* or *proper* notion?"

With respect to his *moral* attributes, we find the same appeals,—"Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do *right?*" Here the abstract term *right* is undoubtedly used in the sense commonly received among men, and is supposed to be comprehensible by them.—"The *righteous* LORD loveth righteousness." The righteousness in man which he loveth, is, clearly, correspondent in its kind to that which constitutes him eminently "the righteous Lord."—Still more forcibly, the house of Israel is called upon "to *judge* between him and his vineyard:" he condescends to try his own justice by the notions of justice which prevail among men; in which there could be no meaning, if this moral quality were not in God and in man of the same *kind*.—"Hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way *equal?*" But what force would there be in this challenge, designed to silence the murmurs of a people under correction, as though they had not been justly dealt with, if justice among men had no more resemblance to justice in God than a *hand* to power, or an *eye* to knowledge, or "a map of China to China itself?" The appeal is to a standard common to both, and by which one might be as explicitly determined as the other. (9) Finally, the ground of all *praise* and *ado-*

(9) How can we confess God to be just, if we understand it not? But how can we understand him so, but by the measures of justice? and how shall we know *that*, if there be two justices, one that we know, and one that we know not, one contrary to another? If they be contrary, they are not justice; for *justice* can be no more opposed to *justice*, than *truth* to *truth*: if they be not contrary, then that which we understand to be just in us, is just in God; and that which is just once, is just for ever in the same case and circumstances: and, indeed, how is it that we are in all things of excellency and virtue to be like God, and to be meek like Christ; to *be humble as he is humble*, and to *be pure like God*, to be just after his example, to *be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful?* If there is but one mercy, and one justice, and one meekness, then the *measure* of these, and the *reason*, is eternally the same. If there be two, either they are not essential to God, or else not imitable by us: and then how can we *glorify* God, and *speak honour*

ration of God for works of mercy and judgment,—of all *trust* in God, on account of his faithfulness and truth,—and of all *imitation* of God in his *mercy* and *compassion*,—is laid in every part of the word of God, not surely in this, that there are unknown and unapprehended qualities of *some kind* in God, which lead him to perform actions similar to those which flow from justice, truth and mercy in men; but in the consideration that he is *justice itself*, *truth itself*, and *goodness itself*. The hypothesis is therefore contradicted by the Scripture; and though it has been assumed in favour of a great truth,—that the prescience of God does not destroy the liberty of man,—that truth needs not so cumbrous and mischievous an auxiliary. Divine foreknowledge and the freedom of human agency are compatible, not because foreknowledge in God is a figure of speech, or something different in kind to foreknowledge in man; but because knowledge, simply considered, whether present, past, or future, can have no influence upon action at all, and cannot therefore change a contingent action into a necessary one.

For, after all, where does the great theological difficulty lie, for the evasion of which so much is to be sacrificed? The prescience, counsels, and plans of God, are prescience, counsels, and plans, which respect free agents, as far as men are concerned; and unless we superadd *influence* to necessitate, or plans to *entice irresistibly* and to *entrap inevitably*, into some given course of conduct, there is clearly no incongruity between these and human freedom. There is a difficulty in conceiving *how* foreknowledge should be absolute, as there is a difficulty in conceiving how God's present knowledge should penetrate the heart of man, and know his present thoughts: but neither party argues from the incomprehensibility of the mode to the impossibility of the thing. The great difficulty does not then lie here. It seems to be planted precisely in this, that God should prohibit many things, which he nevertheless knows will occur, and in the prescience of which he regulates his dispensations to bring out of these circumstances various results, which he makes subservient to the displays of his mercy and his justice; and particularly, that in the case of those individuals who, he knows, will finally perish, he exhorts, warns, invites, and, in a word, takes active and influential means to prevent a foreseen result. This forms the difficulty; because, in the case of man, the prescience of failure would, in many cases, paralyze all effort,—whereas, in the government of God, men are treated, in our views, with as much *intensity of care and effort*, as though the issue of things was entirely unknown. But if the perplexity arises from this, nothing can be more clear than

of his name, and *exalt his justice*, and *magnify his truth*, and *sincerity*, and simplicity, if *truth* and *simplicity*, and justice, and mercy in him is not that thing which we understand, and which we are to imitate?" &c. (*Bishop* TAYLOR's "*Ductor Dubitantium.*")

that the question is not, how to reconcile God's prescience with the freedom of man; but how to reconcile the *conduct* of God toward man, considered as a free agent, with his own prescience; how to assign a congruity to warnings, exhortations, and other means adopted to prevent destruction as to individuals, with the certain foresight of that terrible result. In this, however, no moral attribute of God is impugned. On the contrary, mercy requires the application of means of deliverance, if man be under a dispensation of *grace;* and *justice* requires it, if man is to be judged for the use or abuse of mercy. The difficulty then entirely resolves itself into a mere matter of *feeling*, which, of course,—as we cannot be judges of a nature infinite in perfection, though similar to what is excellent in our own, nor of proceedings which, in the unlimited range of the government of God, may have connections and bearings beyond all our comprehension,—we cannot reduce to a human standard. Is it, then, to adjust a mere matter of *feeling*, that we are to make these outrageous interpretations of the word of God, in what he hath spoken of himself? And are we to deny that we have no "proper or *direct notion* of God," because we cannot find him out to perfection? This difficulty, which we ought not to dare to try by human standards, is not one however, we again remark, which arises at all out of the relation of the Divine prescience to the liberty of human actions; and it is entirely untouched by any part of this controversy. We fall into new difficulties through these speculations, but do not escape the true one. If the freedom of man is denied, the moral attributes of God are impugned; and the difficulty, as a matter of *feeling*, is heightened. Divine prescience cannot be denied, because the prophetic Scriptures have determined that already; and if Archbishop King's interpretation of foreknowledge be resorted to, the *something* substituted for prescience, and *equivalent* to it, comes in, to bring us back, in a fallacious circle, to the point from which we started.

It may therefore be certainly concluded, that the omniscience of God comprehends his certain *prescience* of all events however contingent; and if any thing more were necessary to strengthen the argument above given, it might be drawn from the irrational, and, above all, the unscriptural consequences, which would follow from the denial of this doctrine. These are forcibly stated by President Edwards:—

"It would follow from this notion, (namely, that the Almighty doth not foreknow what will be the result of future contingencies,) that as God is liable to be continually repenting what he has done; so he must be exposed to be constantly changing his mind and intentions as to his future conduct; altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, and forming new schemes and projections. For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, namely, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, through want of

foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingence of the actions of moral agents: he must be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him contingent and uncertain. In such a situation he must have little else to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow. The supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which he has made, and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter shall befall his system; which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision for. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which he may see afterward, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known beforehand, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes, and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make him continually to change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring him into confusion."

CHAPTER V.

Attributes *of God—Immutability, Wisdom.*

Another of the qualities of the Divine nature, on which the sacred writers often dwell, is his *unchangeableness*. This is indicated in his august and awful title, I am. All other beings are dependent and mutable, and thus stand in striking contrast to him who is independent, and therefore capable of no mutation. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish; but thou shalt endure,—yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.—He is the Father of lights, with whom is no *variableness*, neither shadow of turning.—His counsel standeth fast for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations.—His mercy endureth for ever.—His righteousness is like the great mountains, firm and unmovable.—I am the Lord, I *change* not."

Of this truth, so important to religion and to morals, there are many confirmations from subjects constantly open to observation. The general order of nature, in the revolutions of the heavenly bodies; the succession of seasons; the laws of animal and vegetable production; and the perpetuation of every species of beings, from which, if there be occasional deviations, they prove the general regularity and stability of this material system, or they would cease to attract attention. The ample universe, therefore, with its immense aggregate of individual beings and classes of being, displays not only the all-comprehending and pervading power of God; but, as it remains from age to age subject to the same laws, and fulfilling the same purposes, it is a visible image of the existence of a being of steady counsels, free from caprice, and liable to no control. The moral government of God gives its evidence also to the same truth. The laws under which we are now placed, are the same as those which were prescribed to the earliest generations of men. What was vice then, is vice now; and what is virtue now, was then virtue. Miseries of the same kind and degree inflict punishment on the former; peace and blessedness, as formerly, accompany the latter. God has manifested his will to men by successive revelations, the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian, and those distant from each other many ages, but the moral *principles* on which each rests, are precisely the same, and the moral *ends* which each proposes. Their differences are circumstantial, varying according to the age of the world, the condition of mankind, and his own plans of infinite wisdom; but the identity of their *spirit*, their *influence*, and their *character*, shows their author to be an unchangeable being of holiness, truth, justice, and mercy. Vicious men have now the same reason to tremble before God, as in former periods, for he is still "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" and the penitent and the pious have the same ground of hope, and the same sure foundation of trust. These are the cautionary and the cheering moral uses to which the sacred writers constantly apply this doctrine. He is "the Lord, the hope of their fathers;" and in all the changes and vicissitudes of life, this is the consolation of his people. that he will never leave them, nor forsake them. "Though the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, nor shall the covenant of my peace be removed."

It is true, that the stability of the Divine operations, and counsels, as indicated by the laws of the material universe, and the revelations of his will, only show the immutability of God through those periods within which these operations and dispensations have been in force; but in Scripture they are constantly represented as the results of an immutability which arises out of the perfection of the Divine nature itself, and which is therefore *essential* to it. "I am the Lord, I change not:" he changes not, *because* he is "the Lord."—With him there is "no vari-

ableness, neither shadow of turning;" because he is "the *Father of lights*," the source and fulness of all light and perfection whatever. Change in any sense which implies defect and infirmity, and therefore imperfection, is impossible to absolute perfection; and immutability is therefore essential to his Godhead. In this sense, he is never capable of any kind of change whatever, as even a heathen has so strongly expressed it, ουδεποτε, ουδαμη, ουδαμως αλλοιωσιν, ουδεμιαν ενδεχεται (PLATO *in Phæd.*) For "if we consider the nature of God, that he is a self-existent and independent Being, the great Creator and wise Governor of all things; that he is a spiritual and simple being, void of all parts and all mixture, that can induce a change; that he is a sovereign and uncontrollable Being, which nothing from without can affect or work an alteration in; that he is an eternal being, which always has, and always will go on in the same tenor of existence; an omniscient being, who, knowing all things, has no reason to act contrary to his first resolves; and, in all respects, a most perfect being, that can admit of no addition or diminution; we cannot but believe, that both in his essence, in his knowledge, and in his will and purposes, he must of necessity be unchangeable. To suppose him otherwise, is to suppose him an imperfect being: for if he change, it must be either to a greater perfection than he had before, or to a less; if to a greater perfection, then was there plainly a defect in him, and a privation of something better than what he had, or was; then again was he not always the *best*, and consequently not always God: if he change to a lesser perfection, then does he fall into a defect again; lose a perfection he was possessed once of, and so ceasing to be the best being, cease at the same time to be God. The sovereign perfection of the Deity therefore is an invincible bar against all mutability; for, which way soever we suppose him to change, his supreme excellency is nulled or impaired by it: for since in all changes, there is something from which, and something to which, the change is made, a loss of what the thing had, or an acquisition of what it had not, it must follow, that if God change to the better, he was not perfect before, and so not God; if to be worse, he will not be perfect, and so no longer God, after the change. We esteem changeableness in men either an imperfection or a fault: their natural changes, as to their persons, are from weakness and vanity; their moral changes, as to their inclinations and purposes, are from ignorance or inconstancy, and therefore this quality is no way compatible with the glory and attributes of God." (*Charnock.*)

In his being and perfections, God is therefore eternally THE SAME. He cannot cease to be, he cannot be more perfect because his perfection is *absolute*; he cannot be less so, because he is *independent* of all external power, and has no internal principle of decay. We are not however so to interpret the immutability of God, as though his *operations*

admitted no change, and even no contrariety; or that his mind was incapable of different *regards* and *affections* toward the same creatures under different circumstances. He creates and he destroys; he wounds and he heals; he works and ceases from his works; he loves and hates; but these, as being under the direction of the same immutable wisdom, holiness, goodness, and justice, are the proofs, not of changing, but of unchanging *principles*, as stated in the preceding chapter. They are perfections, not imperfections. Variety of operation, the power to commence, and cease to act, show the *liberty* of his nature; the direction of this operation to wise and good ends shows its excellence. Thus in Scripture language "he repents" of threatened, or commenced punishment, and shows mercy; or "*is weary of forbearing*" with the obstinately guilty, and so inflicts vengeance. Thus, "he hates the evil doer," and "loveth the righteous." That love too may be lost, "if the righteous turn away from his righteousness;" and that hatred may be averted, "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness." There is a sense in which this may be called change in God, but it is not the change of imperfection and defect. It argues precisely the contrary. If when "the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness," God's love to him were unchangeable, he could not be the unchangeably holy God, the hater of iniquity; and "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness," and, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, becomes a new creature, if he did not become the object of God's love, God would not be the unchangeable lover of righteousness. By these Scriptural doctrines, the doctrine of the Divine immutability is not therefore contradicted, but confirmed.

Various speculations, however, on the Divine immutability occur in the writings of divines and others, which, though often well intended, ought to be received with caution, and sometimes even rejected as bewildering or pernicious. Such are the notions, that God knows every thing by *intuition;* that there is no succession of ideas in the Divine mind, that he can receive no new idea; that there are no affections in God, for to suppose that would suppose that he is capable of *emotion;* that if there are affections in God, as love, hatred, &c, they always exist in the same degree, or else he would suffer change: for these and other similar speculations, recourse may be had to the schoolmen, and metaphysicians, by those who are curious in such subjects; but the impression of the Divine character, thus represented, will be found very different to that conveyed by those inspired writings in which God is not spoken of *by men*, but speaks of *himself;* and nothing could be more easily shown than that most of these notions are either idle, as assuming that we know more of God than is revealed; or such as tend to represent the Divine Being as rather a necessary, than a free agent, and his moral perfections as resulting from a blind physical *necessity* of nature.

more than from an essential moral excellence, or, finally, as unintelligible, or absurd. As a specimen of the latter, the following passages may be taken from a work in some repute. The arguments are drawn from the schoolmen, and though broadly given by the author, will be found more or less to *tinge* the remarks on the immutability of God, in the most current systems of theology, and discourses on the attributes:—

"His knowledge is independent upon the objects known, therefore whatever changes there are in them, there is none in him. Things known are considered either as past, present, or to come, and these are not known by us in the same way; for concerning things past it must be said that we once knew them; or of things to come, that we shall know them hereafter; whereas God, with one view, comprehends all things past and future, as though they were present.

"If God's knowledge were not unchangeable, he might be said to have different thoughts or apprehensions of things at one time, from what he has at another, which would argue a defect of wisdom. And indeed a change of sentiments implies ignorance, or weakness of understanding; for to make advances in knowledge, supposes a degree of ignorance: and to decline therein is to be reduced to a state of ignorance: now it is certain, that both these are inconsistent with the infinite perfection of the Divine mind; nor can any such defect be applied to him, who is called, *The only wise God.*" (RIDGLEY'S *Body of Divinity.*)

In thus representing the knowledge of God as "independent of the objects known;" in order to the establishing of such an *immutability* of knowledge, as is not only not inconsistent with the perfection of that attribute, but without which it could not be perfect; and in denying that knowledge in God has any respect to the past, present, and future of things, a very important distinction between the knowledge of things *possible*, and the knowledge of things *actual*, both of which must be attributed to God, is strangely overlooked.

In respect of possible beings, the Divine knowledge has no relation to time, and there is in it no past, no future; he knows his own wisdom and omnipotence, and that is knowing every thing respecting them. But to the possible existence of things, we must now add actual existence; that commenced with time, or time with that. Here then is another branch of the Divine knowledge, the knowledge of things actually existing, a distinction with which the operations of our own minds make us familiar; and from the actual existence of things arise order and succession, past, present, and future, not only in the things themselves, but in the Divine knowledge of them also; for as there could be no knowledge of things in the Divine mind as actually existing, which did not actually exist, for that would be falsehood, not truth, so if things have been brought into actual existence in succession, the knowledge of their actual existence must have been successive also: for as

actual existences they could not be known as existing before they were. The actual being of things added nothing to the knowledge of the infinite mind as to their *powers* and *properties*. Those he knew from himself, the source of all being, for they all depended upon his will, power, and wisdom. There was no need, for instance, to set the mechanism of this universe in motion, that he might know how it would play, what properties it would exhibit, what would be its results; but the knowledge of the universe, as a congeries of beings in ideal, or possible existence, was not the knowledge of it as a real existence; *that*, as far as we can see, was only possible when "he spake and it was done, when he commanded and it stood fast:" the knowledge of the actual existence of things with God is therefore successive, because things come into being in succession, and, as to actual existences, there is foreknowledge, present knowledge, and after knowledge, with God as well as with ourselves.

But not only is a distinction to be made between the knowledge of God as to things possibly, and things actually existing; but also between his knowledge of all possible things, and of those things to which he determined before their creation to give actual existence. To deny that in the Divine mind any distinction existed between the apprehension of things which would remain possible only, and things which in their time were to come into actual being, would be a bold denial of the *perfect knowledge* of God.

Here however it is intimated, that this makes the knowledge of God to be derived from something out of himself, and if he derive his knowledge from something out of himself, then it must be *dependent*. And what evil follows from this? The knowledge of the nature, properties, and relations of things, God has from himself, that is from the knowledge he has of his own wisdom and omnipotence, by which the things that are have been produced, and from which only they could be produced, and in this respect his knowledge is not dependent; but the knowledge that they actually exist is not from himself, except as he makes them to exist; and when they are made to be, then is the knowledge of their actual existence derived from them, that is, from the fact itself. As long as they are, he knows that they are; when they cease to be, he knows that they are not; and before they exist he knows that they do not yet exist. His knowledge of the crimes of men, for instance, as *actually* committed, is dependent upon the commital of those crimes. He knows what crime is, independent of its actual existence; but the knowledge of it as committed, depends not on himself, but upon the creature. And so far is this from derogating from the knowledge of God, that, according to the common reason of things, it is thus only that we can suppose the knowledge of God to be exact and perfect.

But this is not all which sustains the opinion, that there is order and

succession also in the knowledge of the Divine Being. It is not only as far as the knowledge of the successive and transient actual existence of things is concerned, that both fore and after knowledge are to be ascribed to God, but also in another respect. Authors of the class just quoted, speak as though God himself had no ideas of time, and order, and succession; as though past, and present, and to come, were so entirely and exclusively human, that even the infinite mind itself had not the power of apprehending them. But if there be *actually* a successive order of events *as to us*, and if this be something *real*, and not a dream, then must there be a corresponding knowledge of it *in him*, and therefore, in all things which respect us, a knowledge of them as past, present, or to come, that is, as they are in the experience of mankind, and in the truth of things itself. Beside this, if there be what the Scriptures call "*purposes*" with God; if this expression is not to be ranked with those figures of speech which represent Divine power by a hand and an arm, then there is foreknowledge, strictly and properly so called, with God. The knowledge of any thing actually existing is collateral with its existence; but as the intention to produce any thing, or to suffer it to be produced, must be before the actual existence of the thing, because that is finite and caused, so that very intention is in proof of the *precognition* of that which is to be produced, immediately by the act of God, or mediately through his permission. The actual occurrence of things in succession as to us, and in pursuance of his purpose or permission, is therefore a sufficient proof of the existence of a strict and proper prescience of them by almighty God. As to the possible nature, and properties, and relations of things, his knowledge *may* have no succession, no order of time; but when those archetypes of things in the eternal mind, come into actual being by his power or permission, it is in pursuance of previous intention: ideas of time are thus created, so to speak, by the very order in which he produces them, or purposes to produce them, and his knowledge of them as *realities* corresponds to their nature and relations, because it is *perfect* knowledge. He knows them before they are produced, as things which are to be produced or permitted; when they are produced, he knows them with the additional idea of their actual being; and when they cease to be, he knows them as things which have been.

Allied to the attribute of immutability is the LIBERTY of God, which enables us to conceive of his unchangeableness in the noblest and most worthy manner, as the result of his will, and infinite moral excellence, and not as the consequence of a blind and physical necessity. "He doth whatever pleaseth him," and his actions are the result of will and choice. This, as Dr. S. Clarke has well stated it, follows from his *intelligence*; for "intelligence without liberty, is really, in respect of any power, excellence, or perfection, no intelligence at all. It is indeed a

consciousness, but it is merely a passive one; a consciousness, not of acting, but purely of being acted upon. Without liberty nothing can, in any tolerable propriety of speech, be said to be an agent, or cause of any thing. For to act necessarily, is really and properly not to act at all, but only to be acted upon.

"If the Supreme Cause is not a being endued with liberty and choice, but a mere necessary agent, whose actions are all as absolutely and naturally necessary as his existence; then it will follow, that nothing which is not, could possibly have been; and that nothing which is, could possibly not have been; and that no mode or circumstance of the existence of any thing could possibly have been in any respect otherwise than it now actually is. All which being evidently most false and absurd, it follows on the contrary, that the Supreme Cause is not a mere necessary agent, but a being endued with liberty and choice."

It is true, that God cannot do evil. "It is impossible for him to *lie*." But "this is a necessity, not of nature and fate, but of fitness and wisdom; a necessity, consistent with the greatest freedom and most perfect choice. For the only foundation of this necessity, is such an unalterable rectitude of will, and perfection of wisdom, as makes it impossible for a wise being to resolve to act foolishly; or for a nature infinitely good, to choose to do that which is evil."

Of the WISDOM of God, it is here necessary to say little, because many instances of it in the *application* of knowledge to accomplish such ends as were worthy of himself and requisite for the revelation of his glory to his creatures, have been given in the proofs of an *intelligent* and *designing* cause, with which the world abounds. On this, as well as on the other attributes, the Scriptures dwell with an interesting complacency, and lead us to the contemplation of an unbounded variety of instances in which this perfection of God has been manifested to men. He is "*the only wise God*;" and as to his works, "in *wisdom* hast thou made them all." Every thing has been done by nice and delicate adjustment, by number, weight, and measure. "He seeth under the whole heaven, to make the *weight* for the winds, to *weigh* the waters by *measure*, to make a *decree* for the rain, and a *way* for the lightning of the thunder." Whole volumes have been written on this amazing subject "the Wisdom of God in the Creation," and it is still unexhausted. Every research into nature, every discovery as to the laws by which material things are combined, decomposed, and transformed, throws new light upon the simplicity of the elements, which are the subjects of this ceaseless operation of Divine power, and the exquisite skill, and unbounded compass of the intelligence which directs it. The vast body of facts which natural philosophy has collected with so much laudable labour, and the store of which is constantly increasing, is a commentary on the words of inspiration, ever enlarging, and which will continue to

enlarge as long as men remain on earth to pursue such inquiries; "he doeth great things past finding out, and wonders *without number*." "Lo these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him!" The excellent books which have been written with the express design to illustrate the wisdom of God, and to exhibit the final causes of the creation, and preservation of the innumerable creatures with which we are surrounded, must be referred to on so copious a subject, (1) and a few general remarks must suffice.

The first character of wisdom is to act for *worthy ends*. To act with *design* is a sufficient character of *intelligence;* but *wisdom* is the *fit* and *proper* exercise of the understanding; and though we are not adequate judges of what it is fit and proper for God to do in every case, yet for many of his acts the *reasons* are at least partially given in his own word, and they command at once our adoration and gratitude, as worthy of himself and benevolent to us. The reason of the creation of the world was the manifestation of the perfections of God to the rational creatures designed to inhabit it, and to confer on them, remaining innocent, a felicity equal to their largest capacity. The *end* was important, and the means by which it was appointed to be accomplished evidently *fit*. *To be* was itself made a source of satisfaction. God was announced to man as his Maker, Lord, and Friend, by revelation; but invisible himself, every object was fitted to make him present to the *mind* of his creature, and to be a remembrancer of his power, glory, and care. The heavens "declared his glory;" the fruitful earth "his goodness." The understanding of man was called into exercise by the number and variety, and the curious structure of the works of God; pleasures of taste were formed by their sublimity, beauty, and harmony. "Day unto day uttered speech, night unto night taught knowledge;" and God in his law, and in his creative munificence and preserving care, was thus ever placed before his creature, arrayed in the full splendour of his natural and moral attributes, the object of awe and love, of trust and of submission. The great moral end of the creation of man, and of his residence in the world, and the means by which it was accomplished, were, therefore, displays of the Divine wisdom.

It is another mark of wisdom when the process by which any work is accomplished is simple, and many effects are produced from one or a few elements. "When every several effect has a particular separate cause, this gives no pleasure to the spectator, as not discovering contrivance; but that work is beheld with admiration and delight as the result

(1) Ray's "Wisdom of God."—Derham's Astro and Physico-Theology.—*Paley's* Nat. Theol.—Sturm's Reflections.—Kirby and Spence's Entomology; and, though not written with any such design, St. Pierre's "Studies of Nature" open to the mind that can supply the pious sentiments which the author unfortunately wanted many striking instances of the wisdom and benevolence of God.

of deep counsel, which is complicated in its parts, and yet simple in its operation, when a great variety of effects are seen to arise from one principle operating uniformly." (*Abernethy on Attributes.*) This is the character of the works of God. From one material substance, (2) possessing the same essential properties, all the visible beings which surround us are made; the granite *rock*, and the central all-pervading *sun*; the moveless clod, the rapid lightning, and the transparent air. *Gravitation* unites the atoms which compose the world, combines the planets into one system, governs the regularity of their motions, and yet vast as is its power, and all-pervading as its influence, it submits to an infinite number of modifications, which allow of the motion of individual bodies; and it gives place to even contrary forces, which yet it controls and regulates. One act of Divine power in giving a certain inclination to the earth's axis, produced the effect of the vicissitude of seasons, gave laws to its temperature, and covered it with increased variety of productions. To the composition, and a few simple laws impressed upon light, every object owes its colour, and the heavens and the earth are invested with beauty. A combination of earth, water, and the gasses of the atmosphere, forms the strength and majesty of the oak, the grace and beauty, and odour of the rose; and from the principle of *evaporation*, are formed clouds which "drop fatness," dews which refresh the languid fields, springs and rivers that make the valleys, through which they flow, "laugh and sing."

Variety of equally perfect operation is a character of *wisdom*. In the works of God the variety is endless, and shows the wisdom from which they spring to be infinite. Of that *mind* in which all the *ideas* after which the innumerable objects composing the universe must have had a previous and distinct existence, because after that pattern they were made; and not only the ideas of the things themselves, but of every part of which they are composed; of the place which every particle in their composition should fill, and the part it should act, we can have no adequate conception. The thought is overwhelming. This variety is too obvious to be dwelt upon; yet a few of its nicer shades may be adverted to, as showing, so to speak, the infinite resources, and the endlessly diversified conceptions of the Creator. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works!" All the three kingdoms of nature pour forth the riches of variety. The varied forms of crystalization and composition in *minerals*, the colours, forms, and qualities of *vegetables*; the kinds and properties, and habits of *animals*. The gradations from one class of beings to another from unformed to organic, from dead to living, from mechanic sensitiveness to sensation, from dull to active sense, from sluggishness

(2) "A few undecompounded bodies, which may perhaps ultimately be resolved into still fewer elements, or which may be different forms of the same material, constitute the whole of our tangible universe of things." (*Davy's Chymistry.*)

to motion; from creeping to flying, from sensation to intellect, from instinct to reason, (3) from mortal to immortality, from man to angel, from angel to seraph. Between similitude and total unlikeness variety has a boundless range; but its delicacy of touch, so to speak, is shown in the narrower field that lies between similarity and entire *resemblance*, of which the works of God present so many curious examples. No two things appear exactly alike, when even of the same kind. Plants of the same species, the leaves and flowers of the same plant, have all their varieties. Animals of the same kind have their individual character. Any two blades of grass, or particles of sand, shall show a marked difference when carefully compared. The wisdom of this appears more strongly marked when we consider that important ends, both intellectual and practical, often depend upon it. The resemblances of various natural things in greater or less degree, become the means of acquiring a knowledge of them with greater ease, because it is made the basis of their arrangement into kinds and sorts, without which the human memory would fail, and the understanding be confused. The differences in things are as important as their resemblances. This is strikingly illustrated in the domestic animals and in men. If the individuals of the former did not differ, no property could be claimed in them, or when lost they could not be recovered. The countenance of one human individual differs from all the rest of his species; his voice and his manner have the same variety. This is not only an illustration of the resources of creative power and wisdom; but of design and intention to secure a practical end. Parents, children, and friends, could not otherwise be distinguished, nor the criminal from the innocent. No felon could be identified by his accuser, and the courts of judgment would be obstructed, and often rendered of no avail for the protection of life and property.

To variety of kind and form, we may add variety of *magnitude*. In the works of God, we have the extremes, and those extremes filled up in perfect gradation from magnificence to minuteness. We adore the mighty sweep of that power which scooped out the bed of the fathomless ocean, moulded the mountains, and filled space with innumerable worlds; but the same hand formed the animalcule, which requires the

(3) It is not intended here to countenance the opinion that the difference between the highest instinct and the lowest reason, is not great. It is as great as the difference between an *accountable* and an *unaccountable* nature; between a being under a law of force, and a law of moral obligation and motive; between a nature limited in its capacity of improvement, and one whose capabilities are unlimited. "The rash hypothesis, that the negro is the connecting link between the white man and the ape, took its rise from the arbitrary classification of Linnæus, which associates man and the ape in the same order. The more natural arrangement of later systems separate them into the bimanous and quadrumanous orders. If this classification had not been followed, it would not have occurred to the most fanciful mind to find in the negro an intermediate link. (PRITCHARD *on Man.*)

strongest magnifying power of optical instruments to make it visible In that too the work is perfect. We perceive matter in its most delicate organization, bones, sinews, tendons, muscles, arteries, veins, the pulse of the heart, and the heaving of the lungs. The workmanship is as complete in the smallest as in the most massive of the works of God.

The *connection* and *dependence* of the works of God are as wonderful as their variety. Every thing fills its place, not by accident, but by design; wise regulation runs through the whole, and shows that that whole is the work of one, and of one alone. The meanest weed which grows, stands in intimate connection with the mighty universe itself. It depends upon the atmosphere for moisture, which atmosphere supposes an ocean, clouds, winds, gravitation; it depends upon the sun for colour, and, essentially, for its required degree of temperature. This supposes the revolution of the earth, and the adjustment of the whole planetary system. Too near the sun, it would be burned up; too far from it, it would be chilled. What union of extremes is here,—the grass of the earth, "which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven," with the stupendous powers of nature, the most glorious works of the right hand of God!

So clearly does wisdom display itself, in the adoption of means to ends in the visible world, that there are comparatively few of the objects which surround us, and few of their qualities, the *use* of which is not apparent. In this particular, the degree in which the Creator has been pleased to *manifest* his wisdom is remarkably impressive.

"Among all the properties of things, we discover no inutility, no superfluity. Voluntary motion is denied to the vegetable creation, because mechanical motion answers the purpose. This raises, in some plants, a defence against the wind, expands others toward the sun, inclines them to the support they require, and diffuses their seed. If we ascend higher toward irrational animals, we find them possessed of powers exactly suited to the rank they hold in the scale of existence.

"The oyster is fixed to his rock; the herring traverses a vast extent of ocean. But the powers of the oyster are not deficient; he opens his shell for nourishment, and closes it at the approach of an enemy. Nor are those of the herring superfluous; he secures and supports himself in the frozen seas, and commits his spawn in the summer to the more genial influence of warmer climates. The strength and ferocity of beasts of prey are required by the mode of subsistence allotted to them. If the ant has peculiar sagacity, it is but a compensation for its weakness; if the bee is remarkable for its foresight, that foresight is rendered necessary by the short duration of its harvest. Nothing can be more various than the powers allowed to animals, each in their order yet it will be found, that all these powers, which make the study of nature so endless and so interesting, suffice to their necessities and no more." (*Sumner's Records of Creation.*)

"Equally conspicuous is the wisdom of God in the government of nations, of states, and of kingdoms: yea, rather more conspicuous; if infinite can be allowed to admit of any degrees. For the whole inanimate creation, being totally passive and inert, can make no opposition to his will. Therefore, in the natural world all things roll on in an even uninterrupted course. But it is far otherwise in the moral world. Here evil men and evil spirits continually oppose the Divine will, and create numberless irregularities. Here, therefore, is full scope for the exercise of all the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, in counteracting all the wickedness and folly of men, and all the subtlety of Satan, to carry on his own glorious design, the salvation of lost mankind. Indeed, were he to do this by an absolute decree, and by his own irresistible power, it would imply no wisdom at all. But his wisdom is shown, by saving man in such a manner as not to destroy his nature, nor to take away the liberty which he has given him." (*Wesley's Sermons.*)

But in the means by which offending men are reconciled to God, the inspired writers of the New Testament peculiarly glory as the most eminent manifestations of the *wisdom* of God.

"For the wonderful work of redemption the apostle gives us this note, that 'he hath therein abounded in all wisdom and prudence.' Herein did the perfection of wisdom and prudence shine forth, to reconcile the mighty amazing difficulties and seeming contrarieties, real contrarieties indeed, if he had not some way intervened, to order the course of things, such as the conflict between justice and mercy;—that the one must be satisfied in such a way as the other might be gratified: which could never have had its pleasing grateful exercise without being reconciled to the former. And that this should be brought about by such an expedient, that there should be no complaint on the one hand, nor on the other. Herein hath the wisdom of a crucified Redeemer, that whereof the crucified Redeemer or Saviour was the effected object, triumphed over all the imaginations of men, and all the contrivances even of devils, by that death of his, by which the devil purposed the last defeat, the complete destruction of the whole design of his coming into the world, even by that very means, it is brought about so as to fill hell with horror, and heaven and earth with wonder." (*Howe's Posthumous Works.*)

"Wisdom in the treasure of its incomprehensible light, devised to save man, without prejudice to the perfections of God, by transferring the punishment to a Surety, and thus to punish *sin* as required by *justice*, and pardon the *sinner* as desired by *mercy*." (*Bates's Harmony.*)

CHAPTER VI.

Attributes of God.—*Goodness.*

Goodness, when considered as a distinct attribute of God, is not taken in the sense of universal rectitude, but signifies *benevolence*, or a disposition to communicate happiness. From an inward principle of good will, God exerts his omnipotence in diffusing happiness through the universe, in all fitting proportion, according to the different capacities with which he has endowed his creatures, and according to the direction of the most perfect wisdom. "*Thou art good, and doest good.—The Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.—O praise the Lord! for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.*"

This view of the Divine character in the Holy Scriptures has in it some important peculiarities, too often overlooked, but which give to the revelation they make of God, a singular glory.

Goodness in God is represented as goodness of *nature*; as one of his essential perfections, and not as an accidental or an occasional affection; and thus he is set infinitely above the gods of the heathen, those imaginary creations of the perverted imaginations of corrupt men, whose benevolence was occasional, limited, and apt to be disturbed by contrary passions.

Such were the best views of pagans; but to us a being of a far different character is manifested as our Creator and Lord. One of his appropriate and distinguisning names, as proclaimed by himself, signifies "*The gracious One*," and imports *goodness* in the *principle*; and another, "*The all-sufficient and all-bountiful pourer forth of all good*;" and expresses goodness in *action*. Another interesting view of this attribute is, that the goodness of God is efficient and inexhaustible; it reaches every fit case, it supplies all possible want; and "*endureth for ever.*" Hence the Talmudists explain שדי Shaddai in Gen. xvii, 1, by "*in æternum sufficiens sum*," I am the eternally all-sufficient. Like his emblem, the sun, which sheds his rays upon the surrounding worlds, and enlightens and cherishes the whole creation without being diminished in splendour, he imparts without being exhausted, and, ever giving, has yet infinitely more to give.

A third and equally important representation is, that *he takes pleasure* in the exercise of benevolence; that "he *delights* in mercy." It is not wrung from him with reluctance; it is not stintedly measured out, it is not coldly imparted. God saw the works he had made, that "*they were good*," with an evident gratification and delight in what he had imparted to a world "full of his goodness," and into which sin and

misery had not entered. "He is *rich* to all that call upon him;—he giveth liberally and upbraideth not;—exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think." It is under these views, that the Scriptures afford so much encouragement to *prayer* and lay so strong a ground for that absolute *trust* in God, which they enjoin as one of our highest duties, as it is the source of our greatest comfort.

Another illustration of the Divine goodness, and which is also peculiar to the Scriptures, is, that nothing, if capable of happiness, comes immediately from his forming hands without being placed in circumstances of positive felicity. By heathens, acquainted only with a state of things in which much misery is suffered, this view of the Divine goodness could not be taken. They could not but suppose either many gods, some benevolent; and others, and the greater number, of an opposite character; or one, in whose nature no small proportion of malevolence was intermixed with milder sentiments. The Scriptures, on the contrary, represent misery as brought into the world by the *fault* of creatures; and that otherwise it had never entered. When God made the world, he made it *good;* when he made man, he made him *happy*, with power to remain so. He sows good seed in his field, and if tares spring up, "an enemy hath done this." This is the doctrine of inspiration. Finally, the Scriptures, upon this lapse of man, and the introduction of natural and moral evil, represent God as establishing an order of perfectly sufficient means to remedy both. One of his names is therefore גואל, GOEL, "the Redeemer," and another, בונה, BONAH, "the Restorer." The means by which he justifies these titles, display his goodness with such peculiar eminence, that they are called "*the riches of his grace*," and sometimes "*the riches of his glory*." By the incarnation and sacrificial death of the Son of God, he became the "GOEL," the kinsman, and "*Redeemer*" of mankind; he bought back and "*restored*" the forfeited inheritance of happiness, present and eternal, into the human family, and placed it again within the reach of every human being. In anticipation of this propitiation, the first offender was forgiven and raised to eternal life, and the same mercy has been promised to all his descendants. No man perishes finally but by his own refusal of the mercy of his God. And though the restoration of individuals is not at *once* followed by the removal of the *natural* evils of pain, death, &c; for had the whole race of man accepted the offered grace, they would not, in this present state, have been removed; yet beyond a short life on earth these evils are not extended, and, even in this life, they are made the means of moral ends, tending to a higher moral perfection, and greater happiness in another.

Such are the views of the Divine goodness as unfolded in the Scriptures; views of the utmost importance in an inquiry into the proofs of this attribute of the Divine nature, which are afforded by the actua

circumstances of the world. Independent of their aid, no proper estimate can be taken of the sum of evil, which actually exists; nor of its bearing upon the Divine character. On these subjects there have been conflicting opinions; and the principal reason has been, that many persons on both sides, those who have impugned the goodness of God, and those who have defended it against objections taken from the existence of evil, have too often made the question a subject of pure "natural theology," and have therefore necessarily formed their conclusions on a partial and most defective view of the case. This is not indeed a subject for natural theology. It is absurd to make it so; and the best writers have either been pressed with the insuperable difficulties which have arisen from excluding the light which revelation throws upon the state of man in this world, and his connection with another; or, like Paley, they have burst the self-inflicted restraints, and confessed "that when we let in religious considerations, we let in light upon the difficulties of nature."

With respect to the illustrations of the Divine goodness which are presented in the natural and moral world, there are extremes of opinion on both sides. The views of some are too gloomy, and shut out much of the evidences of the Divine *benignity*: others embrace a system of *Optimism*, and exclude, on the other hand, the manifestations of the Divine *justice* and the retributive character of the universal Governor. The Scriptures enable us to adjust these extremes, and to give to God the glory of an absolute goodness, without limiting its tenderness by severity, or diminishing its majesty by weakness.

The dark side of the actual state of the world and of man, its inhabitant, has often, for insidious purposes, been very deeply shadowed.—The *facts* alleged may indeed be generally admitted. The globe, as the residence of man, has its inconveniencies and positive evils; its variable, and often pernicious climates; its earthquakes, volcanoes, tempests, and inundations; its sterility in some places, which wears down man with labour; its exuberance of vegetable and animal life in others, which generates disease or gives birth to annoying and destructive animals. The diseases of the human race; their short life and painful dissolution; their general poverty; their universal sufferings and cares; the distractions of civil society; oppressions, frauds, and wrongs; must all be acknowledged. To these may be added the sufferings and death of animals, and the universal war carried on between different creatures throughout the earth. This enumeration of evils might, indeed, be greatly enlarged without exaggeration.

But this is not the only view to be taken. It must be combined with others equally obvious; there are lights as well as shadows in the scene, and the darkest masses which it presents are mingled with bright and joyous colours.

For, as Paley has observed, "In a vast plurality of instances, in which contrivance is perceived, the design of the contrivance is *beneficial*.

"When God created the human species, either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about either.

"If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment: or by placing us amidst objects so ill suited to our perceptions as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted, bitter; every thing we saw, loathsome; every thing we touched, a sting; every smell, a stench; and every sound, a discord.

"If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune, (as all design by this supposition is excluded,) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it.

"But either of these, and still more both of them, being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness; and made for them the provision which he has made, with that view and for that purpose.

"The same argument may be proposed in different terms, thus:—Contrivance proves design; and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances; and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil no doubt exists, but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the object of it.—This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's hand, though, from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often follows. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, the engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here pain and misery are the very objects of the contrivance. Now nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body

ever said, this is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout. If by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless: no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment." (*Natural Theology.*)

The chief exceptions to this are those of *venomous* animals, and of animals *preying* upon one another; on the first of which it has been remarked, not only that the number of venomous creatures is few, but that "the animal itself being regarded, the faculty complained of is *good;* being conducive, in all cases, to the defence of the animal; in some cases, to the subduing of its prey; and in some probably to the killing of it, when caught, by a mortal wound inflicted in the passage to the stomach, which may be no less merciful to the victim, than salutary to the devourer. In the viper, for instance, the poisonous fang may do that which, in other animals of prey, is done by the crush of the teeth. Frogs and mice might be swallowed alive without it.

"The second case, namely, that of animals devouring one another, furnishes a consideration of much larger extent. To judge whether, as a general provision, this can be deemed an evil, even so far as we understand its consequences, which probably is a partial understanding, the following reflections are fit to be attended to:—

"1. Immortality upon this earth is out of the question. Without death there could be no generation, no parental relation, that is, as things are constituted, no animal happiness. The particular duration of life, assigned to different animals, can form no part of the objection; because whatever that duration be, while it remains finite and limited, it may always be asked, why is it no longer? The natural age of different animals varies from a single day to a century of years. No account can be given of this; nor could any be given, whatever other proportion of life had obtained among them.

"The term, then, of life in different animals, being the same as it is, the question is, what mode of taking it away is the best even for the animal itself.

"Now, according to the established order of nature, (which we must suppose to prevail, or we cannot reason at all upon the subject,) the three methods by which life is usually put an end to, are acute diseases, decay, and violence. The simple and natural life of brutes is not often visited by acute distempers; nor could it be deemed an improvement of their lot if they were. Let it be considered, therefore, in what a condition of suffering and misery a brute animal is placed, which is left to perish by decay. In human sickness or infirmity, there is the assistance of man's rational fellow creatures, if not to alleviate his pains, at least to minister to his necessities, and to supply the place of his

own activity. A brute, in his wild and natural state, does every thing for himself. When his strength, therefore, or his speed, or his limbs, or his senses fail him, he is delivered over either to absolute famine, or to the protracted wretchedness of a life slowly wasted by scarcity of food. Is it then to see the world filled with drooping, superannuated, half-starved, helpless, and unhelped animals, that you would alter the present system of pursuit and prey? -

"2. This system is also to them the spring of motion and activity on both sides. The pursuit of its prey forms the employment, and appears to constitute the pleasure, of a considerable part of the animal creation. The using of the means of defence or flight, or precaution, forms also the business of another part. And even of this latter tribe we have no reason to suppose that their happiness is much molested by their fears. Their danger exists continually; and in some cases they seem to be so far sensible of it as to provide in the best manner they can against it: but it is only when the attack is actually made upon them that they appear to suffer from it. To contemplate the insecurity of their condition with anxiety and dread, requires a degree of reflection, which (happily for themselves) they do not possess. A hare, notwithstanding the number of its dangers and its enemies, is as playful an animal as any other."

It is to be observed, that as to animals, there is still much happiness

"The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a spring noon or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. 'The insect youth are on the wing.' Swarms of new-born flies are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of place without use or purpose, testify their joy and the exultation which they feel in their lately-discovered faculties. A bee among the flowers, in spring, is one of the cheerfullest objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy and so pleased; yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others. The whole winged insect tribe it is probable, are equally intent upon their proper employments, and, under every variety of constitution, gratified, and perhaps equally gratified, by the offices which the author of their nature has assigned to them. But the atmosphere is not the only scene of enjoyment for the insect race. Plants are covered with aphides, greedily sucking their juices, and constantly, as it should seem, in the act of sucking. It cannot be doubted but that this is a state of gratification. What else should fix them so close to the operation, and so long? Other species are running about with an alacrity in their motions which carries with it every mark of pleasure. Large patches of ground are sometimes half covered with

these brisk and sprightly natures. If we look to what the waters produce, shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margins of rivers, of lakes, and of the sea itself. These are so happy that they know not what to do with themselves. Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps out of the water, their frolics in it, (which I have noticed a thousand times with equal attention and amusement,) all conduce to show their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of that excess.

"At this moment, in every given moment of time, how many myriads of animals are eating their food, gratifying their appetites, ruminating in their holes, accomplishing their wishes, pursuing their pleasures, taking their pastimes! In each individual how many things must go right for it to be at ease; yet how large a proportion out of every species are so in every assignable instant! Throughout the whole of life, as it is diffused in nature, and as far as we are acquainted with it, looking to the average of sensations, the plurality and the preponderancy is in favour of happiness by a vast excess. In our own species, in which perhaps the assertion may be more questionable than in any other, the prepollency of good over evil, of health for example, and ease, over pain and distress, is evinced by the very notice which calamities excite. What inquiries does the sickness of our friends produce! What conversation their misfortunes! This shows that the common course of things is in favour of happiness; that happiness is the rule, misery the exception. Were the order reversed, our attention would be called to examples of health and competency instead of disease and want." (*Paley's Natural Theology.*)

Various alleviations of positive evils, and their being connected with beneficial ends, are also to be taken into consideration. Pain teaches vigilance and caution, and renders its remission in a state of health a source of higher enjoyment. For numerous diseases also, remedies are, by the providence of God, and his blessing upon the researches of man, established. The process of mortal diseases has the effect of mitigating the natural horror we have of death. Sorrows and separations are smoothed by time. The necessity of labour obliges us to occupy time usefully, which is both a source of enjoyment, and the means of preventing much mischief in a world of corrupt and ill-inclined men; and *familiarity* and *habit* render many circumstances and inconveniences tolerable, which, at first sight, we conceive to be necessarily the sources of wretchedness. In all this, there is surely an ample proof and an adorable display of the Divine benevolence.

In considering the actual existence of evils in the world, as it affects the question of the goodness of God, we must also make a distinction between those evils which are self inflicted, and those which are inevitable. The question of the reconcilableness of the *permission* of evil with the goodness of God, will be distinctly considered; but waiving this for the moment, nothing can be more obvious than that man him-

self is chargeable with by far the largest share of the miseries of the present life, and that they draw no cloud over the splendour of universal goodness. View men *collectively*. Sin, as *a ruling habit*, is not necessary. The means of repressing its inward motions, and restraining its outward acts, are or have been furnished to all mankind; and yet were all those miseries which are the effects of voluntary vice removed, how little comparatively would remain to be complained of in the world! Oppressive governments, private wrongs, wars, and all their consequent evils, would disappear. Peace, security, and industry, would cover the earth with fruits, in sufficient abundance for all; and for accidental wants, the helpless, sick, and aged, would find a prompt supply in the charity of others. Regulated passions, and an approving conscience would create benevolent tempers, and these would displace inward disquiet with inward peace. Disease would remain, accidents to life and limb occur, death would ensue; but diseases would in consequence of temperance be less frequent and formidable, men would ordinarily attain a peaceful age, and sink into the grave by silent decay. Beside the removal of so many evils, how greatly would the sum of positive happiness be increased! Intellectual improvement would yield the pleasures of knowledge; arts would multiply the comforts, and mitigate many of the most wasting toils of life; general benevolence would unite men in warm affections and friendships, productive of innumerable reciprocal offices of kindness; piety would crown all with the pleasures of devotion, the removal of the fear of death, and the hope of a still better state of being. All this is *possible*. If it is not *actual*, it is the fault of the human race, not of their Maker and Redeemer; and his goodness is not, therefore, to be questioned, because they are perverse.

But let the world remain as it is, with all its self-inflicted evils, and let the case of an *individual* only be considered, with reference to the number of existing evils, from which, by the merciful provision of the grace of God he may entirely escape, and of those which it is put into his power to mitigate, and even to convert to his benefit. It cannot be doubted as to any individual around us, but that he may escape from the practice and the consequence of every kind of vice, and experience the renewing effects of Christianity—that he may be justified by faith, adopted into the family of God, receive the hallowing influences of the Holy Ghost, and henceforth walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Why do men who profess to believe in Christianity, when employed in writing systems of "Natural Theology," which oblige them to reason on the Divine goodness, and to meet objections to it, forget this, or transfer to some other branch of theology what is so vital to their own argument? Here the benevolence of God to man comes forth in all its brightness, and throws its illustrations upon his dealings with man. What, in this case, would be the quantum of evil left to be suffered by this individual, morally so restored and so

regenerated? No evils, which are the consequences of personal vice, often a long and fearful train. No inward disquiet, the effect of guilty or foolish passions, another pregnant source of misery. No restless pining of spirit after an unknown good, creating a distaste to present innocent enjoyments—he has found that good in the favour and friendship of God. No discontent with the allotments of Providence—he has been taught a peaceful submission. No irritable restlessness under his sufferings and sorrows,—"in patience he possesses his soul." No fearful apprehension of the future—he knows that there is a guiding eye, and a supporting hand above, employed in all his concerns. No tormenting anxiety as to life or death—"he has a lively hope" of an inheritance in heaven. What then of evil remains to him but the common afflictions of life, all of which he *feels*, but does not sink under, and which, as they exercise, improve his virtues, and by rendering them more exemplary and influential to others, are converted into ultimate benefits. Into this state any individual may be raised; and what is thus made possible to us by Divine goodness is of that attribute an adorable manifestation.

These views, however, while they remove the weight of any objections which may be made to the benevolence of the Divine character, taken from the existence of actual evils in the world, are at as great a distance as possible from that theory on this subject which has been denominated *Optimism*. This opinion is, briefly, not that the present system of being is the *best* that might be conceived; but the *best* which the *nature of things* would admit of. That between not creating at all, and creating material, and sentient, and rational beings, as we find them now circumstanced, and with their present qualities, there was no choice. Accordingly, with respect to natural evils, the Optimists appear to have revived the opinion of the oriental and Grecian schools, that matter has in it an inherent defect and tendency to disorder, which baffled the skill of the great Artificer himself to form it into a perfect world; and that moral evil as necessarily follows from finite, and therefore imperfect, natures. No imputation, they infer, can be cast upon the Creator, whose goodness, they contend, is abundantly manifest in correcting many of these evils by skilful contrivances, and rendering them, in numerous instances, the occasion of good. Thus the storm, the earthquake, and the volcano, in the natural world, though necessary consequences of imperfection in the very nature of matter, are rendered by their effects beneficial, in the various ways which natural philosophy points out; and thus even *moral* evils are necessary to give birth, and to call into exercise the opposite qualities of virtue, which but for them could have no exercise; e. g. if no *injuries* were inflicted, there could be no place for the virtue of *forgiveness*. To this also is added the doctrine of *general laws*; according to which, they argue, the universe must be conducted; but that, however well set and constituted general laws may be, they will often thwart and

cross one another; and that from thence particular inconveniencies will arise. The constitution of things is, however, good *on the whole*, and that is all which can be required.

The apology for the Divine goodness afforded by such an hypothesis will not be accepted by those most anxious to defend this attribute from Atheistic cavils; and though it has had its advocates among some who have professed respect for the Scriptures, yet it could never have been adopted by them, had they not been too regardless of the light which they cast upon these subjects, and been led astray by the vain project of constructing perfect systems of *natural religion*, and by attempting to unite the difficulties which arise out of them, by the aid of unassisted reason. The very principle of this hypothesis, that the nature of things did not admit of a better world, implies a very unworthy notion of God. It was pardonable in the ancient advocates of the eternity of matter, to ascribe to it an essential imperfection, and inseparable evil qualities; but if the doctrine of *creation* in the proper sense be allowed, the omnipotence which could bring matter out of *nothing*, was just as able to invest it with good as with evil qualities; and he who arranged it to produce so much beauty, harmony, security, and benefit, as we actually find in the world, could be at no loss to render his work perfect in every respect, and needed not the balancings and counteractions of one evil against another to effect his benevolent purposes. Accordingly, in fact, we find, that when God had finished his work, he pronounced it not merely good *comparatively;* but "very good," or *good absolutely.* Nor is it true that, in the moral world, vice must necessarily exist in order to virtue; and that if we value the *one*, we must in the nature of things be content to take it with the *other*. We are told, indeed, that no *forgiveness* could be exercised by one human being, if *injury* were not inflicted by another; no *meekness* could be displayed, were there no anger; no *long suffering* were there no perverseness, &c. But the fallacy lies in separating the *acts* of virtue, from the *principles* of virtue. All the above instances may be reduced to *one* principle of *benevolence*, which may exist in as high a degree, when never called forth by such occasions; and express itself in acts quite as explicit, in a state of society from which sin is excluded. There are, for instance, according to Scripture, beings, called angels, who kept their first state, and have never sinned. In such a society as theirs, composed probably of different orders of intelligences, some more advanced in knowledge than others, some with higher, and others with lower degrees of perfection, "as one star differeth from another star in glory:" how many exercises of humility and condescension; how much kind communication of knowledge by some, and meek and grateful reception of it by others; how many different ways in which a perfect purity, and a perfect love, and a perfect freedom from selfishness may display themselves! When

therefore, the principle of universal benevolence may be conceived to display itself so strikingly, in a sinless state of society, does it need *injury* to call it forth in the visible form of *forgiveness*; *anger*, in the form of *meekness*; *obstinacy*, in the form of *forbearance*? Certainly not; and it demands no effort of mind to infer, that did such occasions exist to call for it, it would be developed, not only in the particular modes just named, but in every other.

In opposition to the view taken by such theorists, we may deny, that 'whatever is, is *best*." We can not only conceive of a better state of things as possible; but can show that the evils which *actually* exist, whether natural or moral, do not exist *necessarily*. It is, indeed, a proof of the Divine goodness to bring good out of evil; to make storms and earthquakes, which are destructive to the few, beneficial to the many; to render the sins of men occasions to try, exercise, and perfect, various virtues in the good; but if man had been under an unmixed dispensation of mercy, all these ends might obviously have been accomplished, independent of the existence of evils, natural or moral, in any degree. The true key to the whole subject is furnished by Divine revelation. *Sin* has entered the world. Man is under the displeasure of his Maker. Hence we see natural evils, and punitive acts of the Divine administration, not because God is not *good*, but because he is *just* as well as good. But man is not left under condemnation; through the propitiation made for his sins by the sacrifice of Christ, he is a subject of mercy. He is under correction, not under unmingled wrath, and hence the displays of the Divine benevolence, which the world and the acts of Providence every where, and throughout all ages, present; and in proportion as good predominates, kindness triumphs against severity, and the Divine character is emblazoned in our sight as one that "*delighteth in mercy*."

To this representation of the actual relations in which the human race stand to God, and *to no other hypothesis*, the state of the world exactly answers, and thus affords an obvious and powerful confirmation of the doctrine of revelation. This view has been drawn out at length by a late ingenious writer, (*Gisborne's Testimony of Natural Philosophy to Christianity*,) and in many instances, with great felicity of illustration. A few extracts will show the course of the argument. The first relates to the convulsions which have been undergone by the globe itself.

"Suppose a traveller, penetrating into regions placed beyond the sphere of his antecedent knowledge, suddenly to find himself on the confines of a city lying in ruins. Suppose the desolation, though bearing marks of ancient date, to manifest unequivocal proofs that it was not effected by the mouldering hand of time, but has been the result of design and of violence. Dislocated arches, pendant battlements, interrupted aqueducts, towers undermined and subverted, while they record the primeval strength and magnificence of the structures, proclaim the determined

purpose, the persevering exertions, with which force had urged forward the work of destruction. Suppose farther, that in surveying the reliques which have survived through the silent lapse of ages, the stranger discovers a present race of inhabitants, who have reared their huts amidst the wreck. He inquires the history of the scene before him. He is informed, that the city, once distinguished by splendour, by beauty, by every arrangement and provision for the security, the accommodation, the happiness of its occupiers, was reduced to its existing situation by the deliberate resolve and act of its own lawful sovereign, the very sovereign by whom it had been erected, the emperor of that part of the world. 'Was he a ferocious tyrant?'—'No,' is the universal reply. 'He was a monarch pre-eminent for consistency, forbearance, and benignity.'—'Was his judgment blinded, or misled, by erroneous intelligence as to the plans and proceedings of his subjects?'—'He knew every thing but too well. He understood with undeviating accuracy; he decided with unimpeachable wisdom.'—'The case, then,' cries the traveller, 'is plain: the conclusion is inevitable. Your forefathers assuredly were ungrateful rebels; and thus plucked down devastation upon their city, themselves, and their posterity.'

"The actual appearance of the globe on which we dwell, is in strict analogy with the picture of our hypothetical city.

"The earth, whatever may be the configuration, whatever may have been the perturbation or the repose, of its deep and hidden recesses, is, in its superior strata, a mass of ruins. It is not of one land, or of one clime, that the assertion is made; but of all lands, but of all climes, but of the earth universally. Wherever the steep front of mountains discloses their interior construction; wherever native caverns and fissures reveal the disposition of the component materials; wherever the operations of the miner have pierced the successive layers. beneath which coal or metal is deposited convulsion and disruption and disarrangement are visible. Though the smoothness and uniformity which the hand of cultivation expands over some portions of the globe, and the shaggy mantle of thickets and forests with which nature veils other portions hitherto unreplenished and unsubdued by mankind, combine to obscure the vestiges of the shocks which our planet has experienced; as a fair skin and ornamental attire conceal internal fractures and disorganizations in the human frame: to the eye of the contemplative enquirer exploring the surface of the earth, there is apparent many a scar testifying ancient concussion and collision, and laceration; and many a wound yet unhealed, and opening into unknown and unfathomable profundity.

"From this universal scene of confusion in the superior strata of the earth, let the student of natural theology turn his thoughts to the general works of God. What are the characteristics in which those works, however varied in their kinds, in their magnitudes, and in their pur

poses, obviously agree? What are the characteristics by which they are all, with manifest intention, imprinted?—Order and harmony. In every mode of animal life, from the human frame down to the atomic and unsuspected existences in water, which have been rendered visible by the lenses of modern science; in the vegetable world, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop by the wall; from the hyssop by the wall to the minutest plant discernible under the microscope: in the crystalisations of the mineral kingdom, of its metals, of its salts, of its spars, of its gems: in the revolution of the heavenly bodies, and in the consequent reciprocations of day, and night, and seasons:—all is regularity. In the works of God, order and harmony are the rule; irregularity and confusion form the rare exception. Under the Divine government, an exception so portentous as that which we have been contemplating, a transformation from order and harmony to irregularity and confusion involving the integuments of a world, cannot be attributed to any circumstance which, in common language, we term fortuitous. It proclaims itself to have been owing to a moral cause; to a moral cause demanding so vast and extraordinary an effect; a moral cause which cannot but be deeply interesting to man, cannot but be closely connected with man, the sole being on the face of this globe who is invested with moral agency; the sole being, therefore, on this globe who is subjected to moral responsibility; the sole being on this globe whose moral conduct can have had a particle of even indirect influence on the general condition of the globe which he inhabits."

Another instance is supplied from the general deluge. After proving from a number of geological facts, that such a phenomenon must have occurred, the author observes:—

"Thus, while the exterior strata of the earth, by recording in characters unquestionable and indelible the fact of a primeval and penal deluge, attest from age to age the holiness and the justice of God; the form and aspect of its surface are, with equal clearness, testifying from generation to generation his inherent and not less glorious attribute of mercy. For they prove that the very deluge, in its irruption employed as the instrument in his dispensation of vengeance to destroy a guilty world, was, in its recess so regulated by him as to the varying rapidity of its subsidence, so directed by him throughout all its consecutive operations, as to prepare the desolated globe for the reception of a restored succession of inhabitants; and so to arrange the surface, as to adapt it in every climate for the sustenance of the animals, for the production of the trees and plants, and for the growth and commodious cultivation of the grain and the fruits, of which man, in that particular region, would chiefly stand in need.

"During the retirement of the waters, when a barrier of a rocky stratum, sufficiently strong for resistance, crossed the line of descent, a

lake would be in consequence formed. These memorials of the dominion of that element which had recently been so destructive, remain also as memorials of the mercy of the Restorer of nature; and by their own living splendours, and by the beauty and the grandeur of their boundaries, are the most exquisite ornaments of the scenes in which we dwell.

"Would you receive and cherish a strong impression of the extent of the mercy displayed in the renewal of the face of the earth? Would you endeavour to render justice to the subject? Contemplate the number of the diversified effects on the surface of the globe, which have been wrought, arranged, and harmonized by the Divine benignity through the agency of the retiring deluge: and combine in your survey of them the two connected characteristics, utility and beauty; utility to meet the necessities and multiply the comforts of man; beauty graciously superadded to cheer his eye and delight his heart, with which the general aspect of nature is impressed. Observe the mountains, of every form and of every elevation. See them now rising in bold acclivities now accumulated in a succession of gracefully sweeping ascents; now towering in rugged precipices; now rearing above the clouds their spiry pinnacles glittering with perpetual snow. View their sides now darkened with unbounded forests; now spreading to the sun their ample slopes covered with herbage, the summer resorts of the flocks and the herds of subjacent regions; now scooped into sheltered concavities; now enclosing within their ranges glens green as the emerald, and watered by streams pellucid and sparkling as crystal. Pursue these glens as they unite and enlarge themselves; mark their rivulets uniting and enlarging themselves also; until the glen becomes a valley, and the valley expands into a rich vale or a spacious plain, each varied and bounded by hills, and knolls, and gentle uplands, in some parts chiefly adapted for pasturage, in others for the plough; each intersected and refreshed by rivers flowing onward from country to country, and with streams continually augmented by collateral accessions, until they are finally lost in the ocean. There new modes of beauty are awaiting the beholder; winding shores, bold capes, rugged promontories, deeply indented bays, harbours penetrating far inland and protected from every blast. But in these vast and magnificent features of nature, the gracious Author of all things has not exhausted the attractions with which he purposed to decorate inanimate objects. He pours forth beauties in detail, and with unsparing prodigality of munificence, and for whatever other reasons, for human gratification also, on the several portions, however inconsiderable, of which the larger component parts of the splendid whole consist: on the rock, on the fractured stone, on the thicket, on the single tree, on the bush, on the mossy bank, on the plant, on the flower, on the leaf. Of all these works of his wondrous hand, he is continually varying and enhancing the attractions by the diversified

modes and accessions of beauty with which he invests them by the alterations of seasons, by the countless and rapid changes of light and shade, by the characteristic effects of the rising, the meridian, the setting sun, by the subdued glow of twilight, by the soft radiance of the moon; and by the hues, the actions, and the music of the animal tribes with which they are peopled."

The human frame supplies another illustration:—

"Consider the human frame, naked against the elements, instantly susceptible of every external impression; relatively weak, unarmed; during infancy totally helpless; helpless again in old age; occupying a long period in its progress of growth to its destined size and strength; ungifted with swiftness to escape the wild beast of the forest; incapable, when overtaken, of resisting him; requiring daily supplies of food, and of beverage, not merely that sense may not be ungratified, not merely that vigour may not decline, but that closely impending destruction may be delayed. For what state does such a frame appear characteristically fitted? For what state does it appear to have been originally designed? For a state of innocence and security; for a paradisiacal state; for a state in which all elements were genial, all external impressions innoxious; a state in which relative strength was unimportant, arms were needless; in which to be helpless was not to be insecure; in which the wild beast of the forest did not exist, or existed without hostility to man; a state in which food and beverage were either not precarious, or not habitually and speedily indispensable. Represent to yourself man as innocent, and in consequent possession of the unclouded favour of his God; and then consider whether it be probable, that a frame thus adapted to a paradisiacal state, thus designated by characteristical indications as originally formed for a paradisiacal state, would have been selected for the world in which we live. Turn to the contrary representation; a representation the accuracy of which we have already seen the pupil of natural theology constrained, by other irresistible testimonies which she has produced, to allow: regard man as having forfeited, by transgression, the Divine favour, and as placed by his God, with a view to ultimate possibilities of mercy and restoration, in a situation which, amidst tokens and means of grace, is at present to partake of a penal character. For such a situation; for residence on the existing earth as the appointed scene of discipline at once merciful, moral, and penal; what frame could be more wisely calculated? What frame could be more happily adjusted to receive, and to convey, and to aid, and to continue the impressions, which if mercy and restoration are to be attained, must antecedently be wrought into the mind? Is not such a frame, in such a world, a living and a faithful witness, a constant and an energetic remembrancer, to natural reason, that man was created holy; that he fell from obedience: that his existence was continued for purposes

of mercy and restoration; that he is placed in his earthly abode under a dispensation bearing the combined marks of attainable grace, and of penal discipline? Is not such a frame, in such a world, a preparation for the reception, and a collateral evidence to the truth, of Christianity?"

The occupations of man furnish other instances:—

"One of his most general and most prominent occupations will necessarily be the cultivation of the ground. As the products drawn from the soil form the basis, not only of human subsistence, but of the wealth which expands itself in the external comforts and ornaments of social life; we should expect that, under a dispensation comprehending means and purposes of mercy, the rewards of agriculture would be found among the least uncertain and the most liberal of the recompenses, which Providence holds forth to exertion. Experience confirms the expectation, and attests that man is not rejected of his Creator. Yet how great, how continual is the toil annexed to the effective culture of the earth! How constant the anxiety, lest redundant moisture should corrupt the seed under the clod; or grubs and worms gnaw the root of the rising plant; or reptiles and insects devour the blade; or mildew blast the stalk; or ungenial seasons destroy the harvest! How frequently, from these, and other causes, are the unceasing labours, and the promising hopes of the husbandman terminated in bitter disappointment! Agriculture wears not, in this our planet, the characteristics of an occupation arranged for an innocent and a fully favoured race. It displays to the eye of natural theology traces of the sentence pronounced on the first cultivator, the representative of all who were to succeed: 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' It bears, in its toils and in its solicitudes, plain indications that man is a sinner.

"Observations, in substance corresponding with those which have been stated respecting tillage, might be adduced concerning the care of flocks and herds. The return for labour in this branch of employment is, in the ordinary course of events, sufficient, as in agriculture, both to excite and sustain exertion, and to intimate the merciful benignity with which the Deity looks upon mankind. But the fatiguing superintendence, the watchful anxiety, the risks of loss by disease, by casualties, by malicious injury and depredation, and, in many countries, by the inroads of wild beasts, conspire in their amount to enforce the truth which has been inculcated. They inscribe the page of natural theology with the Scriptural denunciation: that the labour and the pain assigned to man are consequences of transgression.

"Another of the principal occupations of man consists in the extraction of the mineral contents of the earth, and in the reduction of the metals into the states and the forms requisite for use. On the toil, the

arksomeness, and the dangers attendant on these modes of life, it is unnecessary to enlarge. They have been discussed; and have been shown to be deeply stamped with a penal character appropriate to a fallen and guilty race.

"Another and a very comprehensive range of employment consists in the fabrication of manufactures. These, in correspondence with the necessities, the reasonable desires, the self indulgence, the ingenuity, the caprices, and the luxury of individuals, are diversified beyond enumeration. But it may be affirmed generally concerning manufactures in extensive demand, that, in common with the occupations which have already been examined, they impose a pressure of labour, an amount of solicitude, and a risk of disappointment, such as we cannot represent to ourselves as probable in the case of beings holy in their nature, and thoroughly approved by their God. The tendency also of such manufactures is to draw together numerous operators within a small compass; to crowd them into close workshops and inadequate habitations, to injure their health by contaminated air, and their morals by contagious society.

"Another line of exertion is constituted by trade, subdivided into its two branches, domestic traffic and foreign commerce. Both, at the same time that they are permitted in common with the modes of occupation already named to anticipate, on the whole, by the appointment of Providence, such a recompense as proves adequate to the ordinary excitement of industry, and to the acquisition of the moderate comforts of life; are marked with the penal impress of toil, anxiety, and disappointment. Natural theology still reads the sentence, 'In the sweat of thy face, in sorrow, shalt thou eat bread.' Vigilance is frustrated by the carelessness of associates, or profit intercepted by their iniquity. Uprightness in the dealer becomes the prey of fraud in the customer. The ship is wrecked on a distant shore, or sinks with the cargo, and with the merchant in the ocean." (*Testimony of Nature, &c.*)

Numerous other examples are furnished by the author, and might be easily enlarged, so abundant is the evidence; and the whole directly connects itself with the subject under consideration. The voluntary goodness of God is not impugned by the various evils which exist in the world, for we see them accounted for by the actual corrupt state of man, and by a righteous administration, by which goodness *must be controlled* to be an attribute worthy of God. It would otherwise be weakness, a blind passion, and not a wisely-regulated affection. On the other hand, there is clearly no reason for resorting to notions of *necessity*, and defects in the essential nature of created things, to prove that God is *good*; or, in other words, according to the hypothesis above stated, as *good* as the stubbornness of matter, and the *necessity* that vice and misery should exist, would allow. His goodness is limited by *moral*, not by *physical*

reasons, but still, considering the globe as the residence of a fallen and perverse race, that glorious attribute is heightened in its lustre by this very circumstance; it arrays itself before us in all its affecting attributes of mercy, pity, long suffering, mitigation, and remission. It is goodness poured forth in the richest liberality, where moral order permits its unrestrained flow; and it is never withheld but where the general benefit demands it. Penal acts never go beyond the rigid necessity of the case; acts of mercy rise infinitely above all desert.

The above observations all suppose moral evil actually in the world, and infecting the whole human race; but the *origin of evil* requires distinct consideration. How did moral evil arise, and how is this circumstance compatible with the Divine goodness? However these questions may be answered, it is to be remembered that though the answer should leave some difficulties in full force, they do not press exclusively upon the Scriptures. Independent of the Bible, the fact is, that evil exists; and the Theist who admits the existence of a God of infinite goodness, has as large a share of the difficulty of reconciling facts and principles on this subject as the Christian, but with no advantage from that history of the introduction of sin into the world which is contained in the writings of Moses, and none from those alleviating views which are afforded by the doctrine of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ.

As to the source of evil, the following are the leading opinions which have been held. *Necessity*, arising out of the nature of things; the *Manichæan* principle of duality, or the existence of a good and an evil Deity; the doctrine that God is the efficient *cause* or *author* of sin; and finally, that evil is the result of the abuse of the *moral freedom* with which rational and accountable creatures are endowed. With respect to the first, as the *necessity* meant is independent of God, it refutes itself. For if all creatures are under the influence of this necessity, and they must be under it if it arise out of the *nature of things* itself, no virtue could now exist: from the moment of creation the deteriorating principle must begin its operation, and go on until all good is extinguished. Nor could there be any return from vice to virtue, since the nature of things would on that supposition be counteracted, which is impossible.

The second is scarcely worth notice, since no one now advocates it. This heresy, which prevailed in several parts of the Christian world from the third to the sixteenth century, seems to have been a modification of the ancient Magian doctrine superadded to some of the tenets of Christianity. Its leading principle was, that our souls were made by the good principle, and our bodies by the evil one; these two principles being, according to MANI, the founder of the sect, co-eternal and independent of each other. These notions were supposed to afford an easy explanation of the origin of evil, and on that account were zealously propagated. It was, however, overlooked by the advocates of this

scheme, that it left the difficulty without any alleviation at all; for "it is just as repugnant to infinite goodness to create what it foresaw would be spoiled by another, as to create what would be spoiled by the constitution of its nature." (*King's Origin of Evil.*)

The dogma which makes God himself the efficient cause, or author of sin, is direct blasphemy, and it is one of those culpable extravagances into which men are sometimes betrayed by a blind attachment to some favourite theory. This notion is found in the writings of some of the most unguarded advocates of the Calvinistic hypothesis, though now generally abandoned by the writers of that school. A modern defender of Calvinism thus puts in his disclaimer, "God is not the author of sin. A Calvinist who says so I regard as Judas, and will have no communion with him." (4) The general abandonment of this notion, so offensive and blamable, renders it unnecessary to enter into its refutation. If refutation were required it would be found in this, that the first pair who sinned were subjected to punishment for, and on account of sin; which they could not in justice have been, had not their crime been chargeable upon themselves.

The last opinion, and that which has been generally received by theologians, is, that moral evil is the result of a voluntary abuse of the freedom of the will in rational and moral agents; and that, as to the human race, the first pair sinned by choice, when the power to have remained innocent remained with them. "Why is there *sin* in the world? Because man was created in the image of God; because he is

(4) Scott's *Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism.*—Few have been so daring, except the grosser Antinomians of ancient and modern times. The elder Calvinists, though they often made fearful approaches in their writings to this blasphemy, yet did not, *openly* and *directly*, charge God with being the author of sin. This Arminius, with great candour, acknowledges; but gives them a friendly admonition, to renounce a doctrine from which this aspersion upon the Divine character may, *by a good consequence*, be deduced: a caution not uncalled for in the present day. "Inter omnes blasphemias quæ Deo impingi possunt, omnium est gravissima qua author peccati statuitur Deus: quæ ipsa non parum exaggeratur, si addatur Deum idcirco authorem esse peccati à creatura commissi, ut creaturam in æternum exitium, quod illi jam antè citra respectum peccati destinaverat, damnaret et deduceret: sic enim *fuerit causa injustitiæ homini*, ut ipsi æternam miseriam adferre posset. Hanc blasphemiam nemo Deo, quem bonum concipit, impinget: quare etiam Manichæi, pessimi hæreticorum, quum causam mali bono Deo adscribere verentur, alium Deum et aliud principium statuerunt, cui mali causam deputarent. Qua de causa, nec illis Doctoribus reformaturum Ecclesiarum jure impingi potest, quod *Deum authorem peccati statuant exprofesso;* imo verissimum est illos expresse id negare, et illam calumniam contra alios egregiè confutasse. Attamen *fieri potest, ut quis ex ignorantia aliquod doceat, ex quo bona consequentia deducatur, Deum per illam doctrinam statui authorem peccati.* Hoc si fiat, tum quidem istius doctrinæ professoribus, *non est impingendum quod Deum authorem peccati faciant*, sed tantum monendi ut doctrinam istam, unde id bona consequentia deducitur, deserant et abjiciant."

not mere matter, a clod of earth, a lump of clay, without sense or understanding, but a spirit like his Creator; a being endued not only with sense and understanding, but also with a will exerting itself in various affections. To crown all the rest, he was endued with liberty, a power of directing his own affections and actions, a capacity of determining himself, or of choosing good and evil. Indeed, had not man been endued with this, all the rest would have been of no use. Had he not been a free, as well as an intelligent being, his understanding would have been as incapable of holiness, or any kind of virtue, as a tree or a block of marble. And having this power, a power of choosing good and evil, he chose the latter, he chose evil. Thus 'sin entered into the world.'" (*Wesley's Sermons.*)

This account unquestionably agrees with the history of the fact of the fall and corruption of man. Like every thing else in its kind, he was pronounced "very good;" he was placed under a law of obedience, which, if he had not had the power to observe it, would have been absurd; and that he had also the power to violate it, is equally clear from the prohibition under which he was laid, and its accompanying penalty. The conclusion therefore is, that "God made man upright," with power to remain so, and, on the contrary, to sin and fall.

Nor was this liberty to sin inconsistent with that perfect purity and moral perfection with which he was endowed at his creation. Many extravagant descriptions have been indulged in by some divines as to the intellectual and moral endowments of the nature of the first man, which if admitted to the full extent, would render it difficult to conceive how he could possibly have fallen by any temptations which his circumstances allowed, or indeed how, in his case, temptation could at all exist. His state was high and glorious, but it was still a state not of *reward* but of *trial*, and his endowments and perfections were therefore suited to it. It is, indeed, perhaps going much too far to state, that all created rational beings, being finite, and endowed also with liberty of choice, must, under all circumstances, be liable to sin. It is argued by Archbishop King, that "God, though he be omnipotent, cannot make any created being absolutely perfect; for whatever is absolutely perfect, must necessarily be self-existent: but it is included in the very notion of a creature, as such, not to exist of itself, but of God. An absolutely perfect creature, therefore, implies a contradiction; for t would be of itself, and not of itself, at the same time. Absolute perfection, therefore, is peculiar to God; and should he communicate his own peculiar perfection to another, that other would be God. Imperfection must therefore be tolerated in creatures, notwithstanding the Divine omnipotence and goodness;—for contradictions are no objects of power. God indeed might have refrained from acting, and continued alone self-sufficient and perfect to all eternity; but infinite goodness would by no means

allow of this; and therefore since it obliged him to produce external things, which things could not possibly be perfect, it preferred these imperfect things to none at all; from whence it follows, that imperfection arose from the infinity of Divine goodness." (*Origin of Evil.*)

This in part may be allowed. *Imperfection* must, in comparison of God, and of the creature's own capacity of improvement, remain the character of a finite being; but it is not so clear that this imperfection must, at *all times*, and throughout *the whole course* of existence, imply liability to sin. God is *free*, and yet cannot "be tempted of evil." "It is *impossible* for God to lie;" not for want of natural freedom, but because of an absolute moral perfection. *Liberty*, and *impeccability* imply, therefore, no contradiction; and it cannot, even on rational grounds, be concluded, that a free *finite* moral agent may not, by the special favour of God, be placed in circumstances in which sinning is *morally* impossible. Revelation undoubtedly gives this promise to the faithful, in another state; a consummation to be effected, not by destroying their natural liberty, but by improving their moral condition. This was not however the case with man at his first creation, and during his abode in paradise. His state was not that of the glorified, for it was *probationary*, and it was yet inconceivably advanced above the present state of man; since, with a nature unstained and uncorrupted, it was easy for him to have maintained his moral rectitude, and to have improved and confirmed it. Obedience with him had not those clogs, and internal oppositions, and outward counteractions, as with us. It was, however, a state which required *watchfulness*, and *effort*, and *prayer*, and *denial* of the appetites and passions, since Eve fell by her *appetite*, and Adam by his *passion:* and slight as, in the *first instance*, every external influence which tended to depress the energy of the spiritual life, and lead man from God, might be, and easy to be resisted; it might become a step to a farther defection, and the nucleus of a fatal habit. Thus says Bishop Butler, with his accustomed acuteness: "Mankind, and perhaps all finite creatures, from the very constitution of their nature, before habits of virtue, are deficient, and in danger of deviating from what is right: and therefore stand in need of virtuous habits, for a security against this danger. For, together with the general principle of moral understanding, we have in our inward frame various affections toward particular external objects. These affections are naturally, and of right, subject to the government of the moral principle, as to the occasions upon which they may be gratified: as to the times, degrees and manner, in which the objects of them may be pursued: but then the principle of virtue can neither excite them, nor prevent their being excited. On the contrary, they are naturally felt, when the objects of them are present to the mind, not only before all consideration, whether they can be obtained by awful means, but after it is found they cannot. For the natural objects

of affection continue so: the necessaries, conveniences, and pleasures of life, remain naturally desirable; though they cannot be obtained innocently; nay, though they cannot possibly be obtained at all. And when the objects of any affection whatever cannot be obtained without unlawful means, but may be obtained by them; such affection, through its being excited, and its continuance some time in the mind, be it as innocent as it is natural and necessary; yet cannot but be conceived to have a tendency to incline persons to venture upon such unlawful means: and, therefore, must be conceived as putting them in some danger of it. Now, what is the general security against this danger, against their actually deviating from right? As the danger is, so also must the security be, from within; from the practical principle of virtue. And the strengthening or improving this principle, considered as practical, or as a principle of action, will lessen the danger, or increase the security against it. And this moral principle is capable of improvement, by proper discipline and exercise: by recollecting the practical impressions which example and experience have made upon us: and, instead of following humour and mere inclination, by continually attending to the equity and right of the case, in whatever we are engaged, be it in greater or less matters, and accustoming ourselves always to act upon it; as being itself the just and natural motive of action, and as this moral course of behaviour must necessarily, under Divine government, be our final interest. *Thus the principle of virtue, improved into habit, of which improvement we are thus capable, will plainly be, in proportion to the strength of it, a security against the danger which finite creatures are in, from the very nature of propension, or particular affections.*

"From these things we may observe, and it will farther show this our natural and original need of being improved by discipline, how it comes to pass, that creatures made upright fall; and that those who preserve their uprightness, by so doing, raise themselves to a more secure state of virtue. To say that the former is accounted for by the nature of liberty, is to say no more than that an event's actually happening is accounted for by a mere possibility of its happening. But it seems distinctly conceivable from the very nature of particular affections or propensions. For, suppose creatures intended for such a particular state of life for which such propensions were necessary: suppose them endued with such propensions, together with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue, as a speculative perception of it: and that all these several principles, both natural and moral, forming an inward constitution of mind, were in the most exact proportion possible; *i. e.* in a proportion the most exactly adapted to their intended state of life; such creatures would be made upright, or finitely perfect. Now, particular propensions, from their very nature, must be felt, the objects of them being present; though they cannot be gratified at all, or not with

the allowance of the moral principle. But if they can be gratified without its allowance, or by contradicting it; then they must be conceived to have some tendency, in how low a degree soever, yet some tendency, to induce persons to such forbidden gratification. This tendency, in some one particular propension, may be increased, by the greater frequency of occasions naturally exciting it, than of occasions exciting others. The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency; and may increase it farther, till, peculiar conjunctures perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect; and danger of deviating from right, ends in actual deviation from it: a danger necessarily arising from the very nature of propension; and which, therefore, could not have been prevented, though it might have been escaped, or got innocently through. The case would be, as if we were to suppose a straight path marked out for a person, in which such a degree of attention would keep him steady: but if he would not attend in this degree, any one of a thousand objects, catching his eye, might lead him out of it. Now, it is impossible to say, how much even the first full overt act of irregularity might disorder the inward constitution, unsettle the adjustments, and alter the proportions which formed it, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted: but repetition of irregularities would produce habits. And thus the constitution would be spoiled; and creatures made upright become corrupt and depraved in their settled character, proportionably to their repeated irregularities in occasional acts. But, on the contrary, these creatures might have improved and raised themselves to a higher and more secure state of virtue by the contrary behaviour: by steadily following the moral principle, supposed to be one part of their nature: and thus withstanding that unavoidable danger of defection, which necessarily arose from propension, the other part of it. For by thus preserving their integrity for some time, their danger would lessen; since propensions, by being inured to submit, would do it more easily and of course: and their security against this lessening danger would increase, since the moral principle would gain additional strength by exercise; both which things are implied in the notion of virtuous habits. Thus, then, vicious indulgence is not only criminal in itself, but also depraves the inward constitution and character. And virtuous self government is not only right in itself, but also improves the inward constitution or character: and may improve it to such a degree, that though we should suppose it impossible for particular affections to be absolutely coincident with the moral principle; and consequently should allow, that such creatures as have been above supposed, would for ever remain defectible: yet their danger of actually deviating from right may be almost infinitely lessened, and they fully fortified against what remains of it: if that may be called danger against which there is an adequate effectual security. But still, this their higher perfection

may continue to consist in habits of virtue formed in a state of discipline, and this their more complete security remain to proceed from them. And thus it is plainly conceivable, that creatures without blemish, as they came out of the hands of God, may be in danger of going wrong; and so may stand in need of the security of virtuous habits, additional to the moral principle wrought into their natures by him. That which is the ground of their danger, or their want of security, may be considered as a deficiency in them, to which virtuous habits are the natural supply. And as they are naturally capable of being raised and improved by discipline, it may be a thing fit and requisite, that they should be placed in circumstances with an eye to it: in circumstances peculiarly fitted to be, to them, a state of discipline for their improvement in virtue." (*Analogy.*)

It is easy therefore to conceive, without supposing that moral liberty in all cases *necessarily* supposes liability to commit sin, how a perfectly pure and upright being might be capable of disobedience, though continued submission to God and to his law was not only possible, but practicable without painful and difficult effort. To be in a state of trial, the *moral*, as well as the *natural* freedom to choose evil was essential, and as far as this fact bears upon the question of the Divine goodness, it resolves itself into this, "whether it was inconsistent with that attribute of the Divine nature, to endow man with this liberty, or in other words to place him *in a state of trial* on earth, before his admission into that state from which the possibility of evil is for ever excluded." To this, unassisted reason could frame no answer. By the aid of revelation we are assured, that benevolence is so absolutely the motive and the end of the Divine providence that thus to dispose of man, and consequently to permit his voluntary fall, is consistent with it; but in what *manner* it is so, is involved in obscurity: and the fact being established, we may well be content to wait for the developement of that great process which shall "justify the ways of God to man," without indulging in speculations which, for want of all the facts of the case before us, must always be to a great extent without foundation, and may even seriously mislead. This we know, that the entrance of sin into the world has given *occasion* for the tenderest displays of the Divine goodness in the gift of the great Restorer; and opened, to all who will avail themselves of the blessing, the gate to "glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life." The observations of Doddridge on this subject, have a commendable modesty.

"It will still be demanded, why was moral evil permitted? To this it is generally answered, that it was the result of natural liberty; and it was fit that among all the other classes and orders of beings, some should be formed possessed of this, as it conduces to the harmony of the universe, and to the beautiful variety of beings in it. Yet still it is replied, Why did not God prevent this abuse of liberty? One would

not willingly say, that he is not able to do it, without violating the nature of his creatures; nor is it possible that any should prove this. It is commonly said, that he permitted it, in order to extract from thence greater good. But it may be farther queried, Could he not have produced that greater good without such a means? Could he not have secured among all his creatures universal good, and universal happiness, in full consistency with the liberty he had given them? I acknowledge I see no way of answering this question but by saying, he had indeed a natural power of doing it, but that he saw it better not to do it, though the reasons upon which it appeared preferable to him are entirely unknown to us." (*Doddridge's Lectures.*)

The MERCY of God is not a distinct attribute of his nature, but a mode of his goodness. It is the disposition whereby he is inclined to succour those who are in misery, and to pardon those who have offended "In Scripture language," says Archbishop Tillotson, "it is usually set forth to us by the expressions of pity and compassion; which is an affection that causes a sensible commotion and disturbance in us, upon the apprehension of some great evil, either threatening or oppressing another; pursuant to which, God is said to be *grieved* and *afflicted* for the miseries of men. But though God be pleased in this manner to convey an idea of his mercy and tenderness to us, yet we must take heed how we clothe the Divine nature with the infirmities of human passions: we must not measure the perfections of God by the expressions of his condescension; and because he stoops to our weakness, level him to our infirmities. When therefore God is said to *pity* us, or to be *grieved* at our afflictions, we must be careful to remove the imperfection of the passion, the commotion and disturbance that it occasions, and then we may conceive as strongly of the Divine mercy and compassion as we please; and that it exerts itself in a very tender and affectionate manner.

"And therefore the Holy Scriptures not only tell us, that 'the Lord our God is a merciful God,' but that 'he is the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;' that he 'delights in mercy,—waits to be gracious,—rejoices over us to do good,—and crowneth us with his loving kindness:' to denote the greatness and continuance of this affection, they not only tell us that 'his mercy is above the heavens;' that it extends itself 'over all his works,—is laid up in store for a thousand generations, and is to endure for ever and ever:' to express the intenseness of it, they not only tell us of the 'multitude of his tender mercies,—the sounding of his bowels,' the relentings of his heart, and 'the kindlings of his repentance;' but to give us as sensible an idea as possible of the compassions of God, they compare them to the tenderest affections among men; to that of a father toward his children: 'As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him;' nay

to the compassion of a mother toward her infant: 'can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, she may forget,' it is possible, though very unlikely; but though a mother may become unnatural, yet God cannot prove unmerciful.

"In short, the Scriptures every where magnify the mercy of God, and speak of it with all possible advantage, as if the Divine nature, which does in all perfections excel every other thing, did in this perfection excel itself: and of this we have a farther conviction, if we lift but up our eyes to God, and then turning them upon ourselves, begin to consider how many evils and miseries, that every day we are exposed to, by his preventing mercy are hindered, or, when they were coming upon us, stopped or turned another way: how oft our punishment has he deferred by his forbearing mercy, or, when it was necessary for our chastisement, mitigated and made light: how oft we have been supported in our afflictions by his comforting mercy, and visited with the light of his countenance, in the exigencies of our soul, and the gloominess of despair: how oft we have been supplied by his relieving mercy in our wants, and, when there was no hand to succour, and no soul to pity us, his arm has been stretched out to lift us from the mire and clay, and by a providential train of events, brought about our sustenance and support: and above all, how daily, how hourly, how minutely we offend against him, and yet, by the power of his pardoning mercy, we are still alive: for, considering the multitude and heinousness of our provocations, 'it is of his mercy alone that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not. Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and he will understand the loving kindness of the Lord.'" (*Sermons.*)

CHAPTER VII.

Attributes of God.—*Holiness.*

In creatures, ***holiness*** is conformity to the will of God, as expressed in his laws, and consists in abstinence from every thing which has been comprehended under the general term of ***sin***, and in the habit and practice of ***righteousness***. Both these terms are properly understood to include various principles, affections, and acts, which, considered separately, are regarded as vices or virtues; and, collectively, as constituting a holy or a polluted character. Our conception of holiness in creatures, both in its negative and its positive import, is therefore explicit; it is determined by the will of God. But when we speak of God, we speak of a Being who is a law to himself, and whose conduct cannot be referred to a higher authority than his own. This circumstance has

given rise to various opinions on the subject of the holiness of the Divine Being, and to different modes of stating this glorious attribute of his moral nature. But without conducting the reader into the profitless question, whether there is a fixed and unalterable nature and fitness of things, independent of the Divine will on the one hand; or on the other, whether good and evil have their foundation, not in the nature of things, but only in the Divine will, which makes them such, there is a method, less direct it may be, but more satisfactory, of assisting our thoughts on this subject.

It is certain that various affections and actions have been enjoined upon all rational creatures under the general name of righteousness, and that their contraries have been prohibited. It is a matter also of constant experience and observation, that the good of society is promoted only by the one, and injured by the other; and also that every individual derives, by the very constitution of his nature, benefit and happiness from rectitude; injury and misery from vice. This constitution of human nature is therefore an indication, that the Maker and Ruler of men formed them with the intent that they should avoid vice, and practise virtue; and that the former is the object of his aversion, the latter of his regard. On this principle all the *laws*, which in his *legislative* character almighty God has enacted for the government of mankind, have been constructed. "The law is *holy*, and the commandment *holy*, *just*, and *good*." In the administration of the world, where God is so often seen in his *judicial* capacity, the punishments which are inflicted, indirectly or immediately upon men, clearly tend to discourage and prevent the practice of evil. "Above all, the Gospel, that last and most perfect revelation of the Divine will, instead of giving the professors of it any allowance to sin, because grace has abounded, (which is an injurious imputation cast upon it by ignorant and impious minds,) its chief design is to establish that great principle, God's moral purity, and to manifest his abhorrence of sin, and inviolable regard to purity and virtue in his reasonable creatures. It was for this he sent his Son into the world to turn men from their iniquities, and bring them back to the paths of righteousness. For this, the blessed Jesus submitted to the deepest humiliations and most grievous sufferings. He gave himself, (as St. Paul speaks) for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that it should be holy and without blemish: or, as it is elsewhere expressed, he gave himself for us, to redeem us from our iniquities, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. In all this he is said to have done the will of his Father, and glorified him, that is, restored and promoted in the world, the cause of virtue and righteousness, which is the glory of God. And his life was the visible image of the Divine sanctity, proposed as a familiar example

to mankind, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth. And as Christianity appears, by the character of its author, and by his actions and sufferings, to be a designed evidence of the holiness of God, or of his aversion to sin, and his gracious desire to turn men from it, so the institution itself is perfectly pure, it contains the clearest and most lively descriptions of moral virtue, and the strongest motives to the practice of it. It promises, as from God, the kindest assistance to men, for making the Gospel effectual to renew them in the spirit of their minds, and to reform their lives, by his Spirit sent down from heaven, on purpose to convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. To enlighten them who were in darkness, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to strengthen its converts to true religion, unto all obedience and long suffering, and patience, to enable them to resist temptation, to abound in the fruits of righteousness, and perfect holiness in the fear of God." (*Abernethy's Sermons.*)

Since, then, it is so manifest, that "the Lord loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity," it must be necessarily concluded, that this preference of the one, and hatred of the other, flow from some *principle* in his very *nature*. "That he is the *righteous* Lord. Of purer eyes than to behold evil,—one who cannot look upon iniquity." This principle is *holiness*, an attribute, which, in the most emphatic manner, is assumed by himself, and attributed to him, both by adoring angels in their choirs, and by inspired saints in their worship. He is, by his own designation, "*the* HOLY ONE *of Israel*;" the seraphs in the vision of the prophet, cry continually, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, *is the Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory*," thus summing up all his glories in this sole moral perfection. The language of the sanctuary on earth is borrowed from that of heaven. "*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art* HOLY."

If then there is this principle in the Divine mind, which leads him to prescribe, love, and reward truth, justice, benevolence, and every other virtuous affection and habit in his creatures which we sum up in the term *holiness*; and to forbid, restrain, and punish their opposites; that principle being *essential* in him, a part of his very nature and Godhead, must be the spring and guide of his own conduct; and thus we conceive without difficulty of the essential rectitude or holiness of the Divine nature, and the absolutely pure, and righteous character of his administration: "In him there can be no malice, or envy, or hatred, or revenge, or pride, or cruelty, or tyranny, or injustice, or falsehood, or unfaithfulness; and if there be any thing beside which implies sin, and vice, and moral imperfection, *holiness* signifies that the Divine nature is at an infinite distance from it." (*Tillotson.*) Nor are we only to conceive of this quality negatively, but positively also, as "the actual, perpetual recti

tude of all his volitions, and all the works and actions which are consequent thereupon; and an eternal propension thereto, and love thereof, by which it is altogether impossible to that will that it should ever vary." (*Howe.*)

This attribute of holiness, exhibits itself in two great branches, *justice* and *truth*, which are sometimes also treated of as separate attributes.

JUSTICE, in its principle, is holiness, and is often expressed by the term *righteousness;* but when it relates to matters of government, the universal rectitude of the Divine nature shows itself in inflexible regard to what is *right*, and in an opposition to *wrong*, which cannot be warped or altered in any degree whatever. "*Just* and *right* is he." Justice in God, when it is not regarded as universal, but particular, is either *legislative* or *judicial.*

Legislative justice determines man's duty, and binds him to the performance of it, and also defines the rewards and punishments, which shall be due upon the creature's obedience, or disobedience. This branch of Divine justice has many illustrations in Scripture. The *principle* of it is, that absolute right which God has to the entire and perpetual obedience of the creatures which he has made. This right is unquestionable, and in pursuance of it, all moral agents are placed under *law*, and are subject to rewards or punishments. None are excepted. Those who have not God's revealed law, have a law "written on their hearts," and are "a law unto themselves." The original law of obedience, given to man, was a law not to the first man, but to the whole human race; for if, as the apostle has laid it down, "*the whole world*," comprising both Jews and Gentiles, is "*guilty* before God," then the whole world is under a law of obedience. In this respect God is *just* in asserting his own right to be obeyed, and in claiming, from the creature he has made and preserved, the obedience, which in strict righteousness he owes; but this claim is strictly limited, and never goes beyond justice into rigour. "He is not a hard master, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed." His law is however unchangeable in its demand upon man for universal obedience, because man is considered in it as a creature capable of yielding that obedience; but when the human race became corrupt, means of pardon, consistent with righteous government, were introduced, by the atonement for sin made by the death of Jesus Christ, received by faith; and supernatural aid was put within their reach, by which the evil of their nature might be removed, and the disposition and the power to obey the law of God imparted. The case of heathen nations to whom the Gospel is not yet preached, may hereafter be considered. It involves some difficulties, but it is enough for us to know, that "the Judge of the whole earth will do *right;*" and that

this shall be made apparent to all creatures, when the facts of the whole case shall be disclosed, "in the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Judicial justice, more generally termed *distributive* justice, is that which respects rewards and punishments. God renders to men according to their works. This branch of justice is said to be *remunerative*, or *præmiative*, when he rewards the obedient; and *vindictive*, when he punishes the guilty. With respect to the first, it is indeed reward, properly speaking, not of debt, but of grace; for, antecedently, God cannot be a debtor to his creatures; but since he binds himself by engagements in his law, "this do and thou shalt live," express or tacit, or attaches a particular promise of reward to some particular duty, it becomes a part of *justice* to perform the engagement. On this principle also, St. Paul says, Heb. vi, 10, "God is not *unrighteous* to forget your work, and labour of love. And if we confess our sins, he is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins." "Even this has justice in it. It is upon one account, the highest act of mercy imaginable, considering with what liberty and freedom the course and method were settled wherein sins come to be pardoned: but it is an act of justice also, inasmuch as it is the observation of a method to which he had bound himself, and from which afterward, therefore, he cannot depart, cannot vary." (*Howe's Post. Works.*)

Vindictive or *punitive justice*, consists in the infliction of punishment. It renders the punishment of unpardoned sin *certain*, so that no criminal shall escape; and it guarantees the exact proportion of punishment to the nature and circumstances of the offence. Both these circumstances are marked in numerous passages of Scripture, the testimony of which on this subject may be summed up in the words of *Elihu*: "for the *work* of a man shall he *render* unto him, and cause every man to find *according* to his ways, yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment."

What is called *commutative* justice, relates to the exchange of one thing for another of equal value, and is called forth by contracts, bargains, and similar transactions among men; but this branch of justice belongs not to God because of his dignity. "He hath no equal, there are none of the same order with him to make exchanges with him or to transfer rights to him for any rights transferred from him." "Our righteousness extendeth not to him, nor can man be profitable to his Maker." The whole world of creatures is challenged and humbled by the question, "Who hath given him any thing, and it shall be recompensed to him again?"

Strict *impartiality* is, however, a prominent character in the justice of God. "There is no respect of persons with God." As on the one hand he hateth nothing which he has made, and cannot be influenced

by prejudices and prepossessions; so on the other, he can fear no one however powerful. No being is necessary to him, even as an agent to fulfil his plans, that he should overlook his offences; no combination of beings can resist the steady and equal march of his administration. The majesty of his Godhead sets him infinitely above all such considerations. "The Lord our God is the God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and terrible, which regardeth not persons, neither taketh rewards.—He accepteth not the person of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands."

There are however many circumstances in the administration of the affairs of the world, which appear irreconcilable to that strict and exact exercise of justice we have ascribed to God as the supreme Ruler. These have sometimes been urged as objections, and the writers of systems of "*natural religion*" have often found it difficult to answer them. That has arisen from their excluding from such systems, as much as possible, the light of revelation; and on that account, much more than from the real difficulties of the cases adduced, it is, that their reasonings are often unsatisfactory. Yet if man is, in point of fact, under a dispensation of grace and mercy, and that is now in perfect accordance with the strictest justice of God's moral government, neither his circumstances, nor the conduct of God toward him, can ever be judged of by systems which are constructed expressly on the principle of excluding all such views as are peculiar to the Scriptures. In attempting it the cause of truth has been injured rather than served; because a feeble argument has been often wielded when a powerful one was at hand; and the answer to infidel objectors has been partial, lest it should be said that the full and sufficient reply was furnished, not by human reason, but by the reason, the *wisdom* of God himself as embodied in his word. This is however little better than a solemn manner of trifling with truths which so deeply concern men.

But let the two facts which respect the relations of man to God as the Governor of the world, and which stamp their character upon his administration, be both taken into account;—that God is a just Ruler,—and yet, that offending man is under a dispensation of mercy, which provides, through the sacrifice of Christ meritoriously, and his own repentance and faith instrumentally, for his forgiveness, and for the healing of his corrupted nature; and a strong, and generally a most satisfactory light is thrown upon those cases which have been supposed most irreconcilable to an exact and righteous government.

The doctrine of a *future and general judgment*, which alone explains so many difficulties in the Divine administration, is grounded solely on the doctrine of redemption. Under an administration of strict justice, punishment must have followed offence without delay. This is indicated in the sanction of the first law, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou

shalt surely die," a threat which, we may learn from Scripture, would have been executed fully, but for the immediate introduction of the redeeming scheme. If we suppose the first pair to have preserved their innocence, and any of their descendants at any period to have become disobedient, they must have borne their own iniquity; and punishment, to death and excision, must instantly have followed; for, in the case of a Divine government, where the parties are God and a creature, every sin must be considered capital, since the penalty of death is, in every case, the sentence of the Divine law against transgression. Under such an administration, no reason would seem to exist for a general judgment at the close of the world's duration. That has its reason in the circumstances of trial in which men are placed by the introduction of a method of recovery. Justice, in connection with a sufficient atonement, admits of the suspension of punishment for offence, of long suffering, of the application of means of repentance and conversion; and that throughout the whole term of natural life. The judgment, the examination, and public exhibition of the use or abuse of this patience, and of those means, is deferred to one particular day, in which he who now offers grace shall administer justice, strict and unsparing. This world is not the appointed *place* of final judgment, under the new dispensation; the space of human life on earth is not the *time* appointed for it; and however difficult it may be, without taking these things into consideration, to trace the manifestations of justice in God's moral government, or to reconcile certain circumstances to the character of a righteous governor, by their aid the difficulty is removed. *Justice*, as the *principle* of his administration, has a sufficiently awful manifestation in the miseries which, in this life, are attached to vice; in the sorrows and sufferings to which a corrupted race is subjected; and, above all, in the satisfaction exacted from the Son of God himself, as the price of human pardon: but since the final punishment of persevering and obstinate offenders is, *by God's own proclamation*, postponed to "a day appointed, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," and since also the final rewards of the reconciled and recovered part of mankind are equally delayed, it is folly to look for a perfect exercise of justice in the present state.

We may learn therefore from this,—

That it is no impeachment of a righteous government, that extreme prosperity should be the lot of great offenders. It may be part of a gracious administration to bring them to repentance by *favour*, or it may be designed to make their fall and final punishment more *marked; or it* may be intended to teach the important lesson of the slight value of outward advantages, separate from holy habits and a thankful mind.

2. That it is not inconsistent with rectitude, that even those who are forgiven and reconciled, those who are become dear to God, should be

afflicted and oppressed, since their defects and omissions may require chastisement, and since also these are made the means of their excelling in virtue, of aiding their heavenly mindedness, and of qualifying them for a better state.

3. That as the administration under which man is placed is one of *grace* in harmony with justice, the dispensation of what is matter of pure favour, may have great variety and be even very unequal without any impeachment of justice. The parable of the labourers in the vineyard seems designed to illustrate this. To all God will be able, at the reckoning at the close of the day, to say, "I do thee no wrong;" no principle of justice will be violated; it will then appear that "he reaps not where he has not sown." But the other principle will have been as strikingly made manifest, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?"

With nations the case is otherwise. Their rewards and punishments being of a civil nature, may be fully administered in this life, and, as bodies politic, they have no posthumous existence. Reward and retribution, in their case, have been therefore in all ages *visible* and *striking*, and, in the conduct of the great Ruler to them, "his judgments" are said to be "*abroad* in the earth." In succession, every vicious nation has perished; and always by means so marked, and often so singular, as to bear upon them a broad and legible *punitive* character. With collective bodies of men, indeed, the government of God in this world is greatly concerned; and that both in their civil and religious character; with *Churches*, so to speak, as well as with *states*; and, in consequence, the cases of individuals, as all cannot be of equal guilt or innocence, must often be mixed and confounded. These apparent, and sometimes, perhaps, from the operation of a general system, real irregularities, can be compensated to the good, or overtaken as to the wicked, in their personal character in another state, to which we are constantly directed to look forward, as to the great and ample comment upon all that is obscure in this.

For the discoveries of the word of God as to this attribute of the Divine nature, we owe the most grateful acknowledgments to its Author. Without this revelation, indeed, the conceptions which heathens form of the justice with which the world is administered, are exceedingly imperfect and unsettled. The course of the world is to them a flow without a direction, movement without control; and gloom and impatience must often be the result: (5) taught as we are, we see nothing loose or dis-

(5) The accomplished Quinctilian may be given as an instance of this, and also of what the apostle calls their sorrowing "without hope." In pathetically lamenting the death of his wife and sons, he tells us, that he had lost all taste for study, and that every good parent would condemn him, if he employed his tongue for any other purpose than to accuse the gods, and testify against a

jointed in the system. A firm hand grasps and controls and directs the whole. This governing power is also manifested to us as our friend, our father, and our God, delighting in mercy, and resorting only to severity when we ourselves oblige the reluctant measure. On these firm principles of justice and mercy, truth and goodness, every thing in private as well as public is conducted; and from these stable *foundations*, no change, no convulsion, can shake off the vast frame of human interests and concerns.

Allied to *justice*, as justice is allied to holiness, is the TRUTH of God, which manifestation of the moral character of God has also an eminent place in the inspired volume. His paths are said to be "mercy and *truth*,"—his *words*, *ways*, and *judgments*, to be *true* and righteous. "His mercy is great to the heavens and his *truth* to the clouds. He keepeth *truth* for ever. The strength of Israel will not *lie*. It is impossible that God should *lie*. He is the *faithful* God which keepeth covenant and mercy: he abideth *faithful*." From these and other passages, it is plain that truth is contemplated by the sacred writers in its two great branches, *veracity* and *faithfulness*, both of which they ascribe to God, with an emphasis and vigour of phrase which show at once their belief of the facts, their trust and confidence in them, and the important place which they considered the existence of *such* a being to hold in a system of revealed religion. It forms, indeed, the basis of all religion, to know the *true* God, and to know that that God is *true*. In the Bible this must of necessity be fully and satisfactorily declared, because of the other discoveries which it makes of the Divine nature. If it reveals to us as the only living and true God, a being of knowledge infinitely perfect, then he himself cannot be deceived; and his knowledge is *true*, because conformable to the exact and perfect reality of things. If he is *holy*, without spot or defect, then his *word* must be conformable to his knowledge, will, and intention. On this account he cannot deceive others. In all his dealings with us, he uses a perfect *sincerity*, and represents things as they are, whether laws to be obeyed, or doctrines to be believed. All is perfect and absolute *veracity* in his communications. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

His FAITHFULNESS relates to his engagements, and is confirmed to us with the same certainty as his veracity. If he enters into engagements, promises, and covenants, he acts with perfect freedom. These are acts of grace to which he is under no compulsion, and they can never, therefore, be reluctant engagements which he would wish to violate; because they flow from a ceaseless and changeless inclination to bestow benefits, and a delight in the exercise of goodness. They can never be made in

Providence. "Quis enim bonus parens mihi ignoscat, ac non oderit hanc animi mei firmitatem, si quis in me est alius usus vocis, quam ut incusem deos, superstes omnium meorum, nullam terras despicere providentiam tester?" (*Instit Lib.* 6.)

haste or unadvisedly, for the whole case of his creatures to the end of time is before him, and no circumstances can arise which to him are new or unforeseen. He cannot want the power to fulfil his promises, because he is omnipotent; he cannot promise beyond his ability to make good, because his fulness is infinite; finally, "he cannot deny himself," because "he is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent;" and thus every promise which he has made is guaranteed, as well by his natural attributes of wisdom, power, and sufficiency, as by his perfect moral rectitude. In this manner the true God stands contrasted with the "*lying* vanities" of the heathen deities; and in this his character of truth, the everlasting foundations of his religion are laid. That changes not, because the doctrines taught in it are in themselves true without error, and can never be displaced by new and better discoveries; it fails not, because every gracious promise must by him be accomplished; and thus the religion of the Bible continues from age to age, and from day to day, as much a matter of personal experience as it ever was. In its doctrines it can never become an antiquated theory, for truth is eternal. In its practical application it can never become *foreign* to man, for it enters now, and must ever enter into his concerns, his duties, hopes, and comforts, to the end of time. We know what is *true* as an object of *belief*, because the God of truth has declared it; and we know what is *faithful*, and, therefore, the object of unlimited *trust*, because "he is faithful that hath promised." Whether, therefore, in the language of the old divines, we consider God's word as "*declaratory* or *promisory*," *declaring* "how things are or how they shall be," or *promising* to us certain benefits, its absolute truth is confirmed to us by the truth of the Divine nature itself; it claims the undivided assent of our judgment, and the unsuspicious trust of our hearts; and presents, at once, a sure resting place for our opinions, and a faithful object for our confidence.

Such are the adorable attributes of the ever-blessed God which are distinctly revealed to us in his own word; in addition to which there are other and more general ascriptions of excellence to him, which though, from the very greatness of the subject, and the imperfection of human conception and human language, they are vague and indeterminate, serve, for this very reason, to heighten our conceptions of him, and to set before the humbled and awed spirit of man an overwhelming height and depth of majesty and glory.

God is *perfect*. We are thus taught to ascribe to him every natural and moral excellence we can conceive; and when we have done that, we are to conclude, that if any nameless and unconceived glory be necessary to complete a perfection which excludes all deficiency; which is capable of no excess; which is unalterably full and complete—it exists in him. Every attribute in him is perfect in its *kind*, and is the most

elevated of its kind. It is perfect in its *degree*, not falling in the *least* below the standard of the highest excellence, either in our conceptions, or those of angels, or in the possible nature of things itself. These various perfections are systematically distributed into *incommunicable*, as self existence, immensity, eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, and the like, because there is nothing in creatures which could be signified by such names; no common properties of which these could be the *common terms*, and therefore, they remain peculiarly and exclusively *proper* to God himself: and *communicable*, such as wisdom, goodness, holiness, justice, and truth, because, under the same names, they may be spoken of him and of us, though in a sense infinitely inferior. But all these perfections form the *one* glorious perfection and fulness of excellence which constitutes the Divine nature. They are not accidents, separable from that nature, or superadded to it; but they are his very nature itself, which is and must be perfectly wise and good, holy and just, almighty and all-sufficient. This idea of positive perfection, which runs through the whole of Scripture, warrants us also to conclude, that where *negative* attributes are ascribed to God, they imply always a *positive* excellence. *Immortality* implies "an undecaying fulness of life;" and when God is said to be *invisible*, the meaning is, that he is a being of too high an excellency, of too glorious and transcendent a nature, to be subject to the observation of sense.

God is *all-sufficient*. This is another of those declarations of Scripture, which exalt our views of God into a mysterious, unbounded, and undefined amplitude of grandeur. It is *sufficiency*, absolute plenitude and fulness *from himself*, eternally rising out of his own perfections; *for himself*, so that he is ALL to himself, and depends upon no other being; and *for all that communication*, however large and however lasting, on which the whole universe of existent creatures depends, and from which future creations, if any take place, can only be supplied. The same vast thought is expressed by St. Paul, in the phrase "ALL IN ALL," which, as Howe justly observes, (*Posthumous Works*,) "is a most godlike phrase, wherein God doth speak of himself with Divine greatness and majestic sense. Here is an ALL in ALL; an *all* comprehended and an *all* comprehending; one create, and the other uncreate; the former contained in the latter, and lost like a drop in the ocean, in the all-comprehending, all-pervading, all-sustaining uncreated fulness." "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

God is *unsearchable*. All we see or hear of him is faint and shadowy manifestation. Beyond the highest glory, there is yet an unpierced and unapproached light, a track of intellectual and moral splendour untravelled by the thoughts of the contemplating and adoring spirits who are nearest to his throne. The manifestation of this nature of God, never fully to be revealed, because infinite, is represented as constituting the

reward and the felicity of heaven. This is "to *see* God." This is "to be for ever with the Lord." This is to behold his glory as in a glass, with unveiled face, and to be changed into his image, from glory to glory, in boundless progression and infinite approximation. Yet, after all, it will be as true, after countless ages spent in heaven itself, as in the present state, that none by "searching can *find out* God," that is, "to perfection." He will then be "a God that hideth himself;" and widely as the illumination may extend, "clouds and darkness will still be round about him.—*His glorious name is exalted above all blessing and praise.—Thine, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head over all.*—BLESSED *be the* LORD GOD *of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and* BLESSED *be his glorious* NAME *for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his* GLORY. *Amen and Amen.*"

CHAPTER VIII.

GOD.—*The Trinity in Unity.*

WE now approach this great mystery of our faith, for the declaration of which we are so exclusively indebted to the Scriptures that not only is it incapable of proof *à priori;* but it derives no direct confirmatory evidence from the existence, and wise and orderly arrangement, of the works of God. It stands, however, on the unshaken foundation of his own word; that testimony which he has given of himself in both Testaments; and if we see no traces of it, as of his simple being and operative perfections, in the works of his creative power and wisdom, the reason is that creation in itself could not be the medium of manifesting, or of illustrating it. Some, it is true, have thought the *trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead* demonstrable by natural reason. Poiret and others, formerly, and Professor Kidd, recently, have all attempted to prove, not that this doctrine implies a contradiction, but that it cannot be denied without a contradiction; and that it is impossible but that the Divine nature should *so* exist. The former endeavours to prove that neither creation, nor indeed any action in the Deity was possible, but from this tri-unity. But his arguments, were they adduced, would scarcely be considered satisfactory, even by those whose belief in the doctrine is most settled. The latter argues from notions of duration and space, which themselves have not hitherto been satisfactorily established, and if they had, would yield but slight assistance in such an investigation. This, however, may be said respecting such attempts, that they at least show, that men, quite as eminent for strength of

understanding, and logical acuteness, as any who have decried the doctrine of the trinity as irrational and contradictory, find no such opposition in it to the reason, or to the nature of things, as the latter pretend to be almost self evident. The very opposite conclusions reached by the parties, when they reason the matter by the light of their own intellect only, is a circumstance, it is true, which lessens our confidence in pretended *rational demonstrations*; but it gives neither party a right to assume any thing at the expense of the other. Such failures ought, indeed, to produce in us a proper sense of the inadequacy of human powers to search the deep things of God; and they forcibly exhibit the necessity of Divine teaching in every thing which relates to such subjects, and demand from us an entire docility of mind, where God himself has condescended to become our instructer.

More objectionable than the attempts which have been made to *prove* this mystery by mere argument, are pretensions to explain it; whether, by what logicians call *immanent acts* of Deity upon himself, from whence arise the relations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; or by assuming that the trinity is the same as the three "essential primalities, or active powers in the Divine essence, power, intellect, and will," (6) for which they invent a kind of personification; or, by alleging that the three persons are "*Deus seipsum intelligens, Deus a seipso intellectus, et Deus a seipso amatus.*" All such hypotheses either darken the counsel they would explain, by "words without knowledge," or assume principles, which, when expanded into their full import, are wholly inconsistent with the doctrine as it is announced in the Scripture, and which their advocates have professed to receive.

It is a more innocent theory, that types and symbols of the mystery of the trinity are found in various natural objects. From the fathers, many have illustrated the trinity of persons in the same Divine nature by the analogy of three or more men having each the same *human* nature; by the union of two natures of man in one person; by the trinity of intellectual primary faculties in the soul, *power*, *intellect*, and *will*, "*posse, scire, velle,*" which they say are not three parts of the soul, "it being the whole soul *quæ potest, quæ intelligit, et quæ vult;*" by motion, light, and heat in the sun, with many others. Of these instances however, we may observe, that even granting them all to be philosophically true, they cannot be *proofs*; they are seldom, or very inapplicably *illustrations*; and the best use to which they have ever been put, or of which they are indeed capable, is to silence the absurd objections which are sometimes drawn from things merely natural and finite, by answers which natural and finite things supply; though both the objec-

(6) "Potentia, Intellectus, et Voluntas," or "Potentia, Sapientia, et Amor."—(*Campanella, Richardus*, and others.)

tions and the answers often prove, that the subject in question is too elevated and peculiar to be approached by such analogies. Of these *illustrations*, as they have been sometimes called, Baxter, though inclined to make too much of them, well enough observes,—"It is one thing to show in the creatures a clear demonstration of this trinity of persons, by showing an effect that fully answereth it, and another thing to show such *vestigia*, adumbration, or image of it, as hath those dissimilitudes which must be allowed in any created image of God. This is it which I am to do." (*Christian Religion.*) This excellent man has been charged, perhaps a little too hastily, with adopting one of the theories given above, as his own view of the trinity, a trinity of personified attributes, rather than of real persons. It must, however, be acknowledged, that he has given some occasion for the allegation, but his conclusion is worthy of himself, and instructive to all:—"But for my own part, as I unfeignedly account the doctrine of the trinity the very sum and kernel of the Christian religion, (as exprest in our baptism,) and Athanasius his creed, the best explication of it that ever I read; so I think it very unmeet in these tremendous mysteries to go farther than we have God's own light to guide us." (*Christ. Religion.*)

The term *person* has been variously taken. It signifies in ordinary language an individual substance of a rational or intelligent nature. (7) In the strict *philosophical* sense, it has been said, two or more persons would be two or more distinct beings. If the term person were so applied to the trinity in the Godhead, a plurality of Gods would follow; while if taken in what has been called a *political* sense, personality would be no more than *relation*, arising out of office. Personality in God is, therefore, not to be understood in either of the above senses, if respect be paid to the testimony of Scripture. God is *one being*; this is admitted on both sides. But he is more than one being in three relations; for *personal acts*, that is, such acts as we are used to ascribe to distinct persons, and which we take most unequivocally to characterize personality, are ascribed to each. The Scripture doctrine therefore is, that the persons are not *separate*, but *distinct*; that they "are *united* persons, or persons having no *separate* existence, and that they are so united as to be but *one* being, *one God*." In other words, that the one Divine nature exists under the personal distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"The word *person*," Howe remarks, "must not be taken to signify the same thing, when spoken of God and of ourselves." That is, not *in all respects*. Nevertheless it is the only word which can express the sense of those passages, in which personal acts are unequivocally ascribed to each of the Divine subsistences in the Godhead. Perhaps,

(7) It is defined by Occam, "*Suppositum intelleetuale.*"

however, one may be allowed to doubt whether, *in all respects*, the term *person* may not be taken to signify "the same thing" in us and in God. It is true, as before observed, that three *persons* among men or angels, would convey the idea of three different and separate beings; but it may be questioned whether this arises from any thing *necessarily* conveyed in the idea of *personality*. We have been accustomed to observe personality only in connection with separate beings; but this separation seems to be but a circumstance connected with personality, and not any thing which arises out of personality itself. Dr. Waterland clearly defines the term person, as it must be understood in this controversy, to be "an intelligent agent, having the distinct characters, I, THOU, HE." That one being should necessarily conclude one person *only*, is, however, what none can prove from the nature of things; and all that can be affirmed on the subject is, that it is so in fact among all intelligent creatures with which we are acquainted. Among them, distinct persons are only seen in *separate beings*, but this separation of being is clearly an *accident* of personality; for the circumstance of separation forms no part of the idea of personality itself, which is confined to a capability of performing personal acts. In God, the distinct persons are represented as having a common foundation in *one being:* but this union also forms no part of the idea of personality, nor can be proved inconsistent with it. The manner of the union, it is granted, is incomprehensible, and so is Deity himself, and every essential attribute with which his nature is invested.

It has been said, that the term person is not used in Scripture, and some who believe the doctrine it expresses, have objected to its use. To such it may be sufficient to reply, that provided that which is clearly stated in Scripture, be compendiously expressed by this term, and cannot so well be expressed, except by an inconvenient periphrasis, it ought to be retained. They who believe such a distinction in the Godhead as amounts to a personal distinction, will not generally be disposed to surrender a word which keeps up the force of the Scriptural idea; and they who do not, object not to the term, but to the doctrine which it conveys. It is not, however, so clear, that there is not Scripture warrant for the term itself. Our translators so concluded, when in Heb. i, 3, they call the Son, "the express image" of the "*person*" of the Father. The original word is *hypostasis;* which was understood by the Greek fathers to signify a person, though not, it is true, exclusively so used. (8) The sense of υποστασις in this passage, must, however, be considered as fixed

(8) "Nonnunquam υποστασις pro eo quod nos ουσιαν dicimus et vice versâ ουσια pro eo quod nos υποστασιν appellamus, ab ipsis accepta fuit."—Bishop Bull υποστασις, it ought, however, to be observed, was used in the sense of person before the council of Nice, by many Christian writers, and, in the ancient Greek Lexicons, it is explained by προσωπον, and rendered by the Latins *persona*.

by the apostle's argument, by all who allow the Divinity of the Son of God. For the Son being called "the express image" of the Father, a *distinction* between the Son and the Father is thus unquestionably expressed; but if there be but one God, and the Son be Divine, the distinction here expressed cannot be a distinction of essence, and must therefore be a *personal* one. Not from the Father's essence, but from the Father's hypostasis or person, can he be distinguished. This seems sufficient to have warranted the use of *hypostasis* in the sense of *person* in the early Church, and to authorize the latter term in our own language. In fact, it was by the adoption of the two great theological terms ομοουσιος and υποστασις that the early Church at length reared up impregnable barriers against the two leading heresies into which almost every modification of error as to the person of Christ may be resolved. The former, which is compounded of ομος, *the same*, and ουσια, *substance*, stood opposed to the Arians, who denied that Christ was of the substance of the Father, that is, that he was truly God; the latter, when fixed in the sense of *person*, resisted the Sabellian scheme, which allowed the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, but denied their proper personality.

Among the leading writers in defence of the trinity, there are some shades of difference in opinion, as to what constitutes the *unity* of the three persons in the Godhead. Doddridge thus expresses these leading differences among the orthodox:—

"Mr. Howe seems to suppose, that there are three distinct, eternal spirits, or distinct intelligent hypostases, each having his own distinct, singular, intelligent nature, united in such an inexplicable manner, as that upon account of their perfect harmony, consent, and affection, to which he adds their mutual self consciousness, they may be called the one God, as properly as the different corporeal, sensitive, and intellectual natures united may be called one man.

"Dr. Waterland, Dr. A. Taylor, with the rest of the Athanasians, assert three proper distinct persons, entirely equal to, and independent upon each other, yet making up one and the same being; and that, though there may appear many things inexplicable in the scheme, it is to be charged to the weakness of our understanding, and not to the absurdity of the doctrine itself.

"Bishop Pearson, with whom Bishop Bull also agrees, is of opinion that though God the Father is the fountain of the Deity, the whole Divine nature is communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Spirit, yet so as that the Father and the Son are not separate, nor separable from the Divinity, but do still exist in it, and are most intimately united to it. This was also Dr. Owen's scheme." (*Lectures.*)

The last view appears to comport most exactly with the testimony of Scripture, which shall be presently adduced.

Before we enter upon the examination of the Scriptural proofs of the

trinity, it may be necessary to impress the reader with a sense of the *importance* of this revealed doctrine; and the more so as it has been a part of the subtle warfare of the enemies of this fundamental branch of the common faith, to represent it as of little consequence, or as a matter of useless speculation. Thus Dr. Priestley, "All that can be said for it is, that the doctrine, however improbable in itself, is necessary to explain some particular texts of Scripture; and that, if it had not been for these particular texts we should have found no want of it, for there is neither any fact in nature, nor any one purpose of morals, which are the object and end of all religion, that requires it." (*History of Early Opinions.*)

The non-importance of the doctrine has been a favourite subject with its opposers in all ages, that by allaying all fears in the minds of the unwary, as to the consequences of the opposite errors, they might be put off their guard, and be the more easily persuaded to part with "the faith delivered to the saints." The answer is, however, obvious.

1. The knowledge of God is *fundamental* to religion; and as we know nothing of him but what he has been pleased to reveal, and as these revelations have all *moral* ends, and are designed to promote *piety* and not to gratify *curiosity*, all that he has revealed of himself in *particular*, must partake of that character of fundamental importance, which belongs to the knowledge of God in the aggregate. "This is *life eternal*, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Nothing, therefore, can disprove the fundamental importance of the trinity in unity, but that which will disprove it to be a doctrine of Scripture.

2. Dr. Priestley allows, that this doctrine "is necessary to explain some particular texts of Scripture." This alone is sufficient to mark its importance; especially as it can be shown, that these "*particular* texts of Scripture" comprehend a very large portion of the sacred volume; that they are scattered throughout almost all the books of both Testaments; that they are not incidentally introduced only, but solemnly laid down as revelations of the nature of God; and that they manifestly give the *tone* both to the *thinking* and the *phrase* of the sacred writers on many other weighty subjects. That which is necessary to explain so many passages of holy writ, and without which, they are so incorrigibly unmeaning, that the Socinians have felt themselves obliged to submit to their evidence, or to expunge them from the inspired record, carries with it an importance of the highest character. So important, indeed, is it, upon the showing of these opposers of the truth themselves, that we can only preserve the Scriptures by admitting it; for they, first by excepting to the genuineness of certain passages, then by questioning the inspiration of whole books, and, finally, of the greater part, if not the whole New Testament, have nearly left themselves as destitute of a revelation from God as infidels themselves. No homage more ex

pressive has ever been paid to this doctrine, as the doctrine of the Scriptures, than the liberties thus taken with the Bible, by those who have denied it; no stronger proof can be offered of its importance, than that the Bible *cannot be interpreted upon any substituted theory*, they themselves being the judges.

3. It *essentially* affects our views of God as the object of our worship, whether we regard him as one in essence, and one in person, or admit that in the unity of this Godhead there are three equally Divine persons. These are two very different conceptions. Both cannot be true. The God of those who deny the trinity, is not the God of those who worship the trinity in unity, nor on the contrary; so that one or the other worships what is "nothing in the world;" and, for any *reality* in the object of worship, might as well worship a pagan idol, which also, says St. Paul, "is nothing in the world." "If God be Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the duties owing to God will be duties owing to that triune distinction, which must be paid accordingly; and whoever leaves any of them out of his idea of God, comes so far short of honouring God perfectly, and of serving him in proportion to the manifestations he has made of himself." (*Waterland.*)

As the *object* of our worship is affected by our respective views on this great subject, so also its *character*. We are between the extremes of pure and acceptable devotion, and of gross and offensive idolatry, and must run to one or the other. If the doctrine of the trinity be true, then those who deny it do not worship the God of the Scriptures, but a fiction of their own framing; if it be false, the trinitarian, by paying Divine honours to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, is equally guilty of idolatry, though in another mode.

Now it is surely important to determine this; and which is the most likely to have fallen into this false and corrupt worship, the very *primâ facie* evidence may determine:—the trinitarian, who has the *letter, and plain, common-sense interpretation of Scripture* for his warrant;—or he who confesses that he must resort to all the artifices of criticism, and boldly challenge the inspiration of an authenticated volume, to get rid of the evidence which it exhibits against him, if taken in its first and most obvious meaning. (9) It is not now attempted to prove the Socinian heresy from the Scriptures; this has long been given up, and the main effort of all modern writers on that side has been directed to cavil at the adduced proofs of the opposite doctrine. They are as to Scripture argument, wholly on the *defensive*, and thus allow, at least, that they have no direct warrant for their opinions. We acknowledge, indeed, that the charge of idolatry would lie against us, could we be proved in error;

(9) St. Paul says, that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;* but Dr. Priestley tells us, that this signifies *nothing more* than that the books were written by good men, with the best views and designs.

but they seem to forget, that it lies against them, should they be in error, and that they are in this error, they themselves tacitly acknowledge, if the Scriptures, which they now in great measure reject, must determine the question. On that authority, we may unhesitatingly account them idolaters, worshippers of what "is nothing in the world;" and not of the God revealed in the Bible. (1) Thus, the only hope which is left to the Socinian, is held on the same tenure as the hope of the Deist,—the forlorn hope that the Scriptures, which he rejects, are not true; for if those texts they reject, and those books which they hold of no authority be established, then this whole charge, and its consequences, lie full against them.

4. Dr. Priestley objects. "that no fact in nature, nor any one purpose of morals, requires this doctrine." The first part of the objection is futile and trifling, if he meant that the facts of nature do not require this doctrine for their philosophical illustration; for who seeks the explication of natural phenomena in theological doctrines? But there is one view in which even right views of the facts of nature depend upon proper views of the Godhead. All nature has a theological *reason*, and a theological *end*; and its interpretation in these respects, rests wholly upon the person and office of our Lord. All things were made *by* the Son and *for* him; a theological view of the natural world, which is large or contracted, emphatic or spiritless, according to the conceptions which we form of the Son of God, "by whom, and for whom" it was built, and is preserved. The reason why the present circumstances of the natural world are, as before shown, neither wholly perfect, nor without large remains of original perfection; neither accordant with the condition of condemned, nor of innocent creatures; but adapted only to such a state of man as the redeeming scheme supposes; cannot, on the Socinian hypothesis, be discovered; for that redeeming scheme depends for its character upon our views of the person of Christ. Without a settled opinion on these points, we are therefore, in this respect also, without the key to a just and full explanation of the *theological* character of our present residence, the world.

Another relation of the natural world to theology, lies in its duration. It was made for Christ; and the reason which determines that it shall be burned up centres in him. He is appointed judge, and shall terminate the present scene of things, by destroying the frame of the visible universe, when the probation of its inhabitants shall have expired

(1) To this purpose, *Witsius*, who shows that there can be neither religion nor worship, unless the trinity be acknowledged. "Nulla etiam religio est, nisi quis verum Deum colat; non colit verum Deum, *sed cerebri sui figmentum*, qui non adorat in æquali divinitatis majestate Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum. I nunc, et doctrinam eam ad *praxin* inutilem esse clama, sine qua nulla *Fides* aut, *Pietatis* Christianæ *praxis* esse potest."

I beg the reader to turn to the remarks before made on the reason of a general judgment being found in the fact, that man is under *grace*, and not strict *law*; and the argument offered to show, that if we were under a covenant of mere obedience, no cause for such an appointment, as that of a general judgment, would be obvious. If those views be correct, then the reason, both of a general judgment and the final destruction of the world, is to be found in the system of redemption, and consequently in such views of the person of Christ, as are not found in the Socinian scheme. The conclusion therefore is, that as "to facts in nature," even they are intimately connected, in several very important respects, which no wise man can overlook, with the doctrine of the trinity. Socinianism cannot explain the peculiar physical state of the world as connected with a state of trial; and the general judgment, and the "end of all things," bear no relation to its theology.

The connection of the orthodox doctrine with *morals* is, of course, still more direct and striking; and dim must have been that intellectual eye which could not discern that, granting to the believers in the trinity their own principles, its relation to morals is vital and essential. Whether those principles are supported by the Scripture, is another consideration. If they could be disproved, then the doctrine ought to be rejected on a higher ground than that here urged; but to attempt to push it aside, on the pretence of its having no connection with morals, was but a very unworthy mode of veiling the case. For what are "morals," but conformity to a Divine law, which law must take its character from its author? The trinitarian scheme is essentially connected with the doctrine of atonement; and what is called the unitarian theory necessarily excludes atonement. From this arise opposite views of God, as the Governor of the world; of the law under which we are placed; of the nature and consequences of sin, the violation of that law; points which have an essential relation to morals, because they affect the nature of the *sanctions* which accompany the law of God. He who denies the doctrine of the trinity, and its necessary adjunct, the atonement, makes sin a matter of comparatively trifling moment: God is not strict to punish it; and if punishment follow, it is not eternal. Whether, under these soft and easy views of the law of God, and of its transgression by sin, morals can have an equal sanction, or human conduct be equally restrained, are points too obvious to be argued; but a subject which involves views of the judicial character of God so opposite, and of the evil and penalty of offence, must be considered as standing in the most intimate relation with every question of *morals*. It is presumed, too, in the objection, that *faith*, or, in other words, a firm belief in the testimony of God, is no part of morality. It is, however, sufficient to place this matter in a very different light if we recollect, that to believe is so much a *command* that the highest sanction is connected with it "He that

believeth shall be *saved*, and he that believeth not shall be *damned*." Nothing, therefore, can be more important to us than to examine, without captiousness and the spirit of unbelief, what God hath revealed as the object of our faith, since the rejection of any revealed truth, under the influence of pride, whether of the reason or the heart; or through affectation of independence; or love of the world; or any other corrupt motive; must be certainly visited with punishment: the *law of faith* having the same authority, and the same sanction as the *law of works*. It is, therefore, a point of duty to believe, because it is a point of *obedience*, and hence St. Paul speaks of "the obedience of faith." For as it has been well observed, "As to the nature of *faith*, it is a matter of obligation, as being that natural homage which the understanding or will pays to God in receiving and assenting to what he reveals upon his bare word or authority. It is a humiliation of ourselves, and a glorification of God." (*Norris on Christian Prudence.*) It may be added, too, that faith, which implies a submission to God, is an important branch also of discipline.

The objection, that there can be no faith where there is not sufficient evidence to command it, will not affect this conclusion. For when once the evidence of a Divine revelation is admitted, our duty to receive its doctrines does not rest upon the rational evidence we may have of their truth; but upon the much easier and plainer evidence, that they are among the things actually revealed. He, therefore, who admits a Divine revelation, and rejects its doctrines, because he has not a satisfactory *rational* evidence of them, is more obviously criminal in his unbelief than he who rejects the revelation itself; for he openly debates the case with his Maker, a circumstance which indicates, in the most striking manner, a corrupt habit of mind. It is, indeed, often pretended, that such truths are rejected, not so much on this account, as that they do not appear to be the sense of the revelation itself. But this cannot be urged by those who openly lay it down as a principle, that a true revelation can contain nothing which to them appears unreasonable; or that if it does, they are bound by the law of their nature not to admit it. Nor will it appear to be any other than an unworthy and dishonest pretence in all cases where such kinds of criticism are resorted to, to alter the sense of a text, or to disprove its authority, as they would not allow in the case of texts supposed, by a partial construction, to favour their own opinion; or such as would be condemned by all learned and sober persons as hypercritical and violent, if applied to any other writings. It may also be added, that should any of the great qualities required in a serious and honest inquirer after truth have been uncultivated and unapplied, though a sincere conviction of the truth of an erroneous conclusion may exist, the guilt of unbelief would not be removed by such kind of sincerity. If there has been no *anxiety* to be right; no *prayer*

earnest and devout, offered to God, to be kept from error; if an *humble* sense of human liability to err has not been maintained; if *diligence* in looking out for proofs, and *patience* and *perseverance* in inquiry, have not been exerted; if *honesty* in balancing evidence, and a firm *resolution* to embrace the truth, whatever prejudices or interests it may contradict or oppose, have not been felt; even sincerity in believing that to be true, which in the present state of a judgment determined, probably, before all the means of information have been resorted to, and, perhaps, under the perverting influences of a worldly or carnal state of mind, may appear to be so, will be no excuse. We are under "a *law* of faith," and that law cannot be supposed to be so pliable and nugatory, as they who contend for the right of believing only what they please, would make it.

These observations will show the connection of the doctrine of the trinity with *morals*, the point denied by Dr. Priestley.

But, to leave this objection for views of a larger extent; our *love to God*, which is the sum of every duty, its sanctifying motive, and consequently a compendium of all true religion, is most intimately and even essentially connected with the doctrine in question. God's love to us is the ground of our love to him; and by our views of that, it must be heightened or diminished. The love of God to man in the gift of his Son is that manifestation of it on which the Scriptures most emphatically and frequently dwell, and on which they establish our duty of loving God and one another. Now the estimate which we are to take of the love of God, must be the value of his gifts to us. His greatest gift is the gift of his Son, through whom alone we have the promise of everlasting life; but our estimate of the love which *gives* must be widely different, according as we regard the *gift* bestowed,—as a creature, or as a Divine person,—as merely a Son of man, or as the Son of God. If the former only, it is difficult to conceive in what this love, constantly represented as "*unspeakable*" and astonishing, could consist. Indeed, if we suppose Christ to be a man only, on the Socinian scheme, or as an exalted creature, according to the Arians, God might be rather said to have "*so loved his Son*" than us, as to send him into the world, on a service so honourable, and which was to be followed by so high and vast a reward, that he, a *creature*, should be advanced to universal dominion and receive universal homage as the price only of temporary sufferings, which, upon either the Socinian or Arian scheme, were not greater than those which many of his disciples endured after him, and, in many instances, not so great. (2)

(2) "Equidem rem attentius perpendenti liquebit, ex hypothesi sive *Socinianâ*, sive *Arianâ*, Deum in hoc negotio amorem et dilectionem suam potius in illum ipsum filium, quam erga nos homines ostendisse. Quid enim? Is qui Christus dicitur, ex mera Dei εὐδοκία et beneplacito in eam gratiam electus est, ut post brevem hic in terris Deo præstitam obedientiam, ex puro puto homine juxta *Soci-*

For the same reason, the doctrine which denies our Lord's Divinity diminishes the love of Christ himself, takes away its *generosity* and *devotedness*, presents it under views infinitely below those contained in the New Testament, and weakens the motives which are drawn from it to excite our gratitude and obedience. "If Christ was in the form of God, equal with God, and very God, it was then an act of infinite love and condescension in him to become man; but if he was no more than a creature, it was no surprising condescension to embark in a work so glorious; such as being the Saviour of mankind, and such as would advance him to be Lord and Judge of the world, to be admired, reverenced, and adored, both by men and angels." (*Waterland's Importance.*) To this it may be added, that the idea of disinterested generous love, such as the love of Christ is represented to be by the evangelists and the apostles, cannot be supported upon any supposition but that he was properly a Divine person. As a man and as a creature only, however exalted, he would have profited by his exaltation; but, considered as Divine, Christ gained nothing. God is full and perfect—he is exalted "above blessing and praise:" and, therefore, our Lord, in that Divine nature, prays that he might be glorified with the Father, with the glory he had BEFORE. Not a glory which was new to him; not a glory heightened in its degree; but the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was." In a manner mysterious to us, even as to his Divine nature, "he emptied himself—he humbled himself;" but in that nature he returned to a glory which he had before the world was. The whole, therefore, was in him *generous disinterested* love, ineffable and affecting condescension. The heresy of the Socinians and Arians totally annihilates, therefore, the true character of the love of Christ, "so that," as Dr. Sherlock well observes, "to deny the Divinity of Christ, alters the very foundations of Christianity, and destroys all the powerful arguments of the *love*, *humility*, and *condescension* of our Lord, which are the peculiar motives of the Gospel." (*Defence of Stillingfleet.*)

But it is not only in this view that the denial of the Divinity of our Lord would alter the foundation of the Christian scheme, but in others equally essential: For,

1. The doctrine of satisfaction or atonement depends upon his Divinity; and it is, therefore, consistently denied by those who reject the former. So important, however, is the decision of this case, that the very terms of our salvation, and the ground of our hope, are affected by it.

nistas, sive ex mera et mutabili creatura, ut *Ario-manitæ* dicunt, *Deus* ipse fieret, ac *divinos* honores, non modo a nobis hominibus sed etiam ab ipsis angelis atque archangelis sibi tribuendos assequeretur, adeoque in alias creaturas omnes dominium atque imperium obtineret." (Bull. *Jud. Eccl. Cathol.*)

The Arians, now however nearly extinct, admitted the doctrine of atonement, though inconsistently. "No *creature* could *merit* from God, or do works of supererogation. If it be said that God might accept it as he pleased, it may be said upon the same principle, that he might accept the blood of bulls and of goats. Yet the apostle tells that *it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin*; which words resolve the satisfaction, not merely into God's free acceptance, but into the *intrinsic value* of the sacrifice." (*Waterland's Importance.*) Hence the Scriptures so constantly connect the atonement with the character,—the very *Divinity* of the person suffering. It was *Jehovah* who was pierced, Zech. xii, 11; *God* who purchased the Church with *his own blood*, Acts xx, 28. It was ὁ Δεσποτης the *high Lord*, that bought us, 2 Pet. ii, 1. It was the *Lord of glory* that was *crucified*, 1 Cor. ii, 8.

It is no small presumption of the impossibility of holding, with any support from the common sense of mankind, the doctrine of atonement with that of an inferior Divinity, that these opinions have so uniformly slided down into a total denial of it, and by almost all persons, except those who have retained the pure faith of the Gospel, Christ is regarded as a man only; and no atonement, in any sense, is allowed to have been made by his death. The terms, then, of human salvation are entirely different on one scheme and on the other; and with respect to their advocates, one is "under *law*," the other "under *grace*;" one takes the cause of his own salvation into his own hands to manage it as he is able, and to plead with God, either that he is just, or that he may be justified by his own penitence and acts of obedient virtue; the other pleads the meritorious death and intercession of his Saviour, in his name and mediation makes his requests known unto God, and asks a justification by faith, and a renewal of heart by the Holy Ghost. One stands with all his offences before his Maker, and in his own person, without a mediator and advocate; the other avails himself of both. A question which involves such consequences is surely not a speculative one; but deeply practical and vital, and must be found to be so in its final issue.

2 The manner in which the evil of sin is estimated must be very different, on these views of the Divine nature respectively; and this is a consequence of a directly practical nature. Whatever lowers in men a sense of what an apostle calls "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," weakens the hatred and horror of it among men, and by consequence encourages it. In the Socinian view, transgressions of the Divine law are all regarded as venial, or, at most, to be subjected to slight and temporary punishment. In the orthodox doctrine, sin is an evil so great in itself, so hateful to God, so injurious in its effects, so necessary to be restrained by punishment, that it dooms the offender to eternal exclusion from God, and to positive endless punishment, and could only be forgiven through

a sacrifice of atonement, so extraordinary as that of the death of the Divine Son of God. By these means, forgiveness only could be promised; and the neglect of them, in order to pardon and sanctification too, aggravates the punishment, and makes the final visitation of justice the more terrible.

3. It totally changes the character of Christian experience. Those strong and painful emotions of sorrow and alarm, which characterize the descriptions and example of REPENTANCE in the Scriptures, are totally incongruous and uncalled for, upon the theory which denies man's *lost* condition, and his salvation by a process of *redemption*. FAITH, too, undergoes an essential change. It is no longer faith *in Christ*. His *doctrine* or his *mission* are its objects; but not, as the New Testament states it, his *person* as a surety, a sacrifice, a mediator; and much less than any thing else can it be called, in the language of Scripture, "*faith in his* BLOOD," a phrase utterly incapable of an interpretation by Socinians. Nor is it possible to offer up PRAYER to God in the *name* of Christ, though expressly enjoined upon his disciples, in any sense which would not justify all the idolatry of the Roman Church, in availing themselves of the *names*, the interests, and the *merits* of saints. In a Socinian, this would even be more inconsistent, because he denies the doctrine of mediation in any sense which would intimate, that a benevolent God may not be immediately approached by his guilty but penitent creatures. LOVE *to Christ*, which is made so eminent a grace in internal and experimental Christianity, changes also its character. It cannot be *supreme*, for that would be to break the first and great command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," if Christ himself be not that Lord our God. It must be love of the same kind we feel to *creatures* from whom we have received any benefit, and a passion, therefore, to be *guarded* and restrained, lest it should become excessive and wean our hearts and thoughts from God. But surely it is not under such views that love to Christ is represented in the Scriptures; and against its excess, as against creaturely attachments, we have certainly no admonition, no cautions. The love of Christ to us also as a motive to generous service, sufferings, and death, for the sake of others, loses all its force and application. "The love of Christ *con*straineth us; for we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were *all* dead." That love of Christ which constrained the apostle was a love which led him to die *for* men. St. John makes the duty of dying for our brother obligatory upon all Christians, if called to it, and grounds it upon the same fact. "He laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren." The meaning, doubtless, is in order to save them; and though men are saved by Christ's dying for them, in a very different sense from that in which they can be saved by our dying in the cause of instructing, and thus instrumentally saving

each other; yet the argument is founded upon the necessary connection which there is between the death of Christ and the salvation of men. But, on the Socinian scheme, Christ did, in no sense, die *for* men, no, not in their general mode of interpreting such passages, "*for the benefit of men:*" for what benefit, independent of *propitiation*, which Socinians deny, do men derive from the voluntary death of Christ, considered as mere human instructer? If it be said his death was an *example*, it was not specially and peculiarly so; for both prophets and apostles have died with resignation and fortitude. If it be alleged, that it was to confirm his doctrine, the answer is, that, in this view, it was nugatory, because it had been confirmed by undoubted miracles. If that he might confirm his mission by his resurrection, this might as well have followed from a natural as from a violent death; and beside the benefit which men derive from him, is, by this notion, placed in his *resurrection*, and not in his *death*, which is always exhibited in the New Testament with marked and striking emphasis. The motive to generous sacrifices of ease and life, in behalf of men, drawn from the death of Christ, have, therefore, no existence whenever his Godhead and sacrifice are denied.

4. The general and habitual exercises of the affections of TRUST, HOPE, JOY, &c, toward Christ, are all interfered with by the Socinian doctrine. This has, in part, been stated; but "if the Redeemer were not omnipresent and omniscient, could we be certain that he always hears our prayers, and knows the source and remedy of all our miseries? If he were not all-merciful, could we be certain he must always be willing to pardon and relieve us? If he were not all-powerful, could we be sure that he must always be able to support and strengthen, to enlighten and direct us? Of any being less than God, we might suspect that his purposes might waver, his promises fail, his existence itself, perhaps, terminate; for of every created being, the existence must be dependent and terminable." (*Dr. Graves's Scriptural Proofs of the Trinity.*)

The *language* too, I say not of the Church of Christ in all ages, for that has been formed upon her faith, but of the Scriptures themselves, must be altered and brought down to these inferior views. No dying saint can say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," if he be a man like ourselves; and the redeemed neither in heaven nor in earth, can dare to associate a creature so with God in Divine honours and solemn worship, as to unite in the chorus, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto HIM that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the *Lamb*, for ever!"

The same essential changes must be made in the doctrine of *Divine agency*, in the heart of man, and in the Church, and the same confusion introduced into the language of Scripture. "Our salvation by Christ does not consist only in the expiation of our sins, &c, but in communication of Divine grace and power, to renew and sanctify us: and this is every where in Scripture attributed to the *Holy Spirit*, as his peculiar office in

the economy of man's salvation: it must therefore make a *fundamental change* in the doctrine of Divine grace and assistance, to deny the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. For can a creature be the universal spring and fountain of Divine grace and life? Can a *finite* creature be a kind of universal soul to the whole Christian Church, and to every sincere member of it? Can a creature make such close application to our minds, know our thoughts, set bounds to our passions, inspire us with new affections and desires, and be more intimate to us than we are to ourselves? If a creature be the only instrument and principle of grace, we shall soon be tempted either to deny the grace of God, or to make it or y an external thing, and entertain very mean conceits of it. All those miraculous gifts which were bestowed upon the apostles and primitive Christians, for the edification of the Church; all the graces of the Christian life, are the fruits of the Spirit. The Divine Spirit is the principle of immortality in us, which first gave life to our souls, and will, at the last day, raise our dead bodies out of the dust; works which sufficiently proclaim him to be God, and which we cannot heartily believe, in the Gospel notion, if he be not." (*Sherlock's Vindication.*) All this has been felt so forcibly by the deniers of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, that they have escaped only by taking another leap down the gulf of error; and, at present, the Socinians deny that there is any Holy Ghost, and resolve the whole into a figure of speech.

But the importance of the doctrine of the holy trinity may be finally argued from the manner in which the denial of it would affect *the credit of the Holy Scriptures* themselves; for if this doctrine be not contained in them, their tendency to mislead is obvious. Their constant language is so adapted to deceive, and even to compel the belief of falsehood, even in fundamental points, and to lead to the practice of idolatry itself, that they would lose all claim to be regarded as a revelation from the God of truth, and ought rather to be shunned than to be studied. A great part of the Scriptures is directed against idolatry, which is declared to be "that abominable thing which the Lord hateth;" and in pursuance of this design, the doctrine that there is but *one* God is laid down in the most explicit terms, and constantly confirmed by appeals to his works. The very first command in the decalogue is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me;" and the sum of the law, as to our duty to God, is that we love HIM "with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength." If the doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead be consistent with all this, then the style and manner of the Scriptures are in perfect accordance with the moral ends they propose, and the truths in which they would instruct mankind; but if the Son and the Holy Spirit are creatures, then is the language of the sacred books most deceptive and dangerous. For how is it to be accounted for, in that case, that, in the Old Testament, God should be spoken of in plural

terms, and that this plurality should be restricted to three? How is it that the very name *Jehovah* should be given to each of them, and that repeatedly and on the most solemn occasions? How is it that the promised, incarnate Messiah should be invested, in the prophecies of his advent, with the loftiest attributes of God, and that works infinitely superhuman and Divine honours should be predicted of him? and that acts and characters of unequivocal Divinity, according to the common apprehension of mankind, should be ascribed to the Spirit also? How is it, that, in the New Testament, the name of *God* should be given to both, and that without any intimation that it is to be taken in an inferior sense? That the *creation* and *conservation* of all things should be ascribed to Christ; that he should be *worshipped* by angels and by men; that he should be represented as seated on the throne of the universe, to receive the adorations of all creatures; and that in the very form of initiation by baptism into his Church, itself a public and solemn profession of faith, the baptism is enjoined to be performed in the *one name* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? One God and two *creatures!* As though the very door of entrance into the Christian Church should have been purposely made the gate of the worst and most corrupting error ever introduced among mankind,—*trust and worship in creatures as God;* the error which has spread darkness and moral desolation over the whole pagan world!

And here it cannot be said that the question is begged, that more is taken for granted than the Socinians will allow; for this argument does not rest at all upon what the deniers of our Lord's Divinity understand by all these terms, and what interpretations may be put upon them. This is the popular view of the subject which has just been drawn from the Scriptures; and they themselves acknowledge it by resorting to the arts and labours of far-fetched criticism, in order to attach to these passages of Scripture a sense different to the obvious and popular one. But it is not merely the popular sense of Scripture. It is so taken, and has been taken in all ages, by the wisest men and most competent critics, to be the only consistent sense of the sacred volume; a circumstance which still more strongly proves, that if the Scriptures were written on Socinian principles, they are more unfortunately expressed than any book in the world; and they can, on no account, be considered a Divine revelation, not because of their obscurity, for they are not obscure, but because terms are used in them which convey a sense different from what the writers intended, if indeed they were Socinians. But their evidences prove them to be a revelation of *truth* from the God of *truth*, and they cannot therefore be so written as to lead men, who use only ordinary care, into fundamental error; and the conclusion therefore must inevitably be, that if we must admit either on the one hand what is so derogatory to the Scriptures, and so subversive of all confidence in them, or, on the other, that the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit

is there explicitly taught, there is no medium between absolute infidelity and the acknowledgment of our Lord's Divinity; and indeed, to adopt the representation of a great divine, it is rather to rave than to reason, to suppose, that he whom the Scriptures teach us to regard as the Saviour of our souls, and as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; he who hears our prayers, and is always present with his Church throughout the world, who sits at the right hand of God, in the glory of his Father, and who shall come at the last day in glory and majesty, accompanied with ministering angels, to judge all mankind and to bring to light the very secrets of their hearts, should be a mere *man* or a *created being* of any kind. (3)

I close this view of the importance of the doctrine of the trinity by the observations of Dr. Waterland:—

"While we consider the doctrine of the trinity as interwoven with the very frame and texture of the Christian religion, it appears to me natural to conceive that the whole scheme and economy of man's redemption was laid with a principal view to it, in order to bring mankind gradually into an acquaintance with the three Divine persons, one God blessed for ever. I would speak with all due modesty, caution, and reverence, as becomes us always in what concerns the unsearchable councils of Heaven: but I say, there appears to me none so natural, or so probable an account of the Divine dispensations, from first to last, as what I have just mentioned, namely, that such a redemption was provided, such an expiation for sins required, such a method of sanctification appointed, and then revealed, that so men might know that there are three Divine persons, might be apprized how infinitely the world is indebted to them, and might accordingly be both instructed and inclined to love, honour, and adore them here, because that must be a considerable part of their employment and happiness hereafter." (*Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity.*)

In order to bring this great controversy in such an order before the reader, as may assist him to enter with advantage into it, I shall first carefully collect the leading testimonies of Scripture on the doctrine of

(3) Οικονομια, quæ ipsi tribuitur, θεολογιαν necessario supponit, ipsumque omnino statuit. Quid enim? Messiam sive Christum prædicant sacræ nostræ literæ et credere nos profitemur omnes, qui sit *animarum sospitator*, qui nobis sit *sapientia, justitia, sanctificatio et redemptio*—qui preces suorum, ubivis sacrosanc tum ejus nomen invocantium, illico exaudiat—qui ecclesiæ suæ per universum terrarum orbem dissominatæ, semper præsto sit—qui Deo Patri, συνθρονος, et in eadem sede collocatus sit—qui denique, in exitu mundi, immensa gloria et majestate refulgens, angelis ministris stipatus, veniet orbem judicaturus, non modo facta omnia, sed et cordis secreta omnium quotquot fuere hominum in lucem proditurus, &c. Hæccine omnia in purum *hominem*, aut *creaturam* aliquam competere? Fidenter dico, qui ita sentiat, non modo contra *Fidem*, sed et *rationem* ipsam insanire. *Bull. Judic. Eccl. Cath.*

the trinity and the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit,—adduce the opinions of the Jewish and Christian Churches,—answer objections,—explain the chief modern heresies on this subject, and give their Scriptural confutation. An observation or two on the *difficulties* in which the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of one undivided Godhead is said to involve us, may properly close this chapter.

Mere difficulty in conceiving of what is wholly proper and peculiar to God, forms no objection to a doctrine. It is more rationally to be considered as a presumption of its truth, since in the nature of God there must be mysteries far above the reach of the human mind. All his natural attributes, though of some of them we have images in ourselves, are utterly incomprehensible; and the manner of his existence cannot be less so. All attempts, however, to show that this great doctrine implies a contradiction, have failed. A contradiction is only where two contraries are predicated of the *same thing, and in the same respect.* Let this be kept in view, and the sophisms resorted to on this point by the adversaries of the faith, will be easily detected. They urge, that the same thing cannot be *three* and *one*, that is, if the proposition has any meaning at all, not in the *same respect;* the three *persons* are not one *person*, and the *one* God is not *three* Gods. But it is no contradiction to say, that in *different respects* the three may be one; that is, that in respect of *persons*, they shall be *three*, and in respect of *Godhead, essence*, or *nature*, they shall be *one.* The manner of the thing is a perfectly distinct question, and its incomprehensibility proves nothing but that we are finite creatures, and not God. As for *difficulties*, we shall certainly not be relieved by running either to the Arian or the Socinian hypothesis. The one ascribes the first formation and the perpetual government of the universe, not to the Deity, but to the wisdom and power of a *creature;* for, however exalted the Arian inferior Deity may be, he is a creature still. The other makes a mere man the creator of all things. For whatever is meant by "*the Word* in St. John's Gospel, it is the same *Word* of which the evangelist says, that all things were made by it, and that itself was made flesh. If this Word be the Divine *attribute* wisdom, then that attribute in the degree which was equal to the formation of the universe, in this view of the Scripture doctrine, was conveyed entire into the mind of a mere man, the son of a Jewish carpenter! A much greater difficulty, in my apprehension, than any that is to be found in the catholic faith." (*Horsley's Letters.*)

CHAPTER IX.

TRINITY.—*Scripture Testimony.*

IN adducing the doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead from the sacred volume, by exhibiting some of its numerous and decisive testimonies as to this being the mode in which the Divine nature subsists; the explicit manner in which it is there laid down, that there is but ONE God, must again be noticed.

This is the foundation and the key stone of the whole fabric of Scriptural theology; and every argument in favour of the trinity flows from this principle of the absolute UNITY of God, a principle which the heresies at which we have glanced fancy to be inconsistent with the orthodox doctrine.

The solemn and unequivocal manner in which the unity of God is stated as a doctrine, and is placed as the foundation of all true religion, whether devotional or practical, need not again be repeated; and it is here sufficient to refer to the chapter on the unity of God.

Of this one God, the high and peculiar, and, as it has been truly called, the *appropriate name*, is JEHOVAH; which, like all the Hebrew names of God, is not an insignificant and accidental term, but a *name of revelation*, a name adopted by God himself for the purpose of making known the mystery of his nature. To what has been already said on this appellation, I may add that the most eminent critics derive it from הוה, *fuit existit*; which in Kal signifies *to be*, and in Hiphel *to cause to be*. Buxtorf, in his definition, includes both these ideas, and makes it signify a being existing from himself from everlasting to everlasting, and communicating existence to others, and adds, that it signifies the Being who *is*, and *was*, and *is to come*. Its derivation has been variously stated by critics, and some fanciful notions have been formed of the import of its several letters; but in this idea of absolute existence all agree. "It is acknowledged by all," says Bishop Pearson, "that יהוה is from הוה or היה, and God's own interpretation proves no less, Exodus iii, 14. Some contend that futurition is essential to the name, yet all agree the root signifieth nothing but *essence* or *existence*, that is, το ειναι or υπαρχειν." (*Exposition of the Creed.*) No appellation of the Divine Being could therefore be more distinctive, than that which imports independent and eternal being; and for this reason probably it was, that the Jews, up to a very high antiquity, had a singular reverence for it; carried, it is true, to a superstitious scrupulosity; but thereby showing that it was the name which unveiled, to the thoughts of those to whom it was first given, the awful and overwhelming glories of a

self-existent Being,—the very unfathomable depths of his eternal Godhead. (4)

In examining what the Scriptures teach of this self-existent and eternal Being, our attention is first arrested by the important fact, that this ONE Jehovah is spoken of under plural appellations, and that not once or twice, but in a countless number of instances. So that the Hebrew names of God, acknowledged by all to be *expressive* and *declaratory* of some peculiarity or excellence of his nature, are found in several cases in the plural as well as in the singular form, and one of them, ALEIM, generally so; and notwithstanding it was so fundamental and distinguishing an article of the Jewish faith, in opposition to the polytheism of almost all other nations, there was but one living and true God. I give a few instances. *Jehovah*, if it has not a plural form, has more than one personal application. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." We have here the visible Jehovah who had talked with Abraham, raining the storm of vengeance from another Jehovah, out of heaven, and who was therefore invisible. Thus we have two Jehovahs expressly mentioned, "the LORD rained from the LORD," and yet we have it most solemnly asserted in Deut. vi, 4, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

The very first name in the Scriptures under which the Divine Being is introduced to us as the Creator of heaven and earth, is a plural one, אלהים, ALEIM; and to connect in the same singular manner as in the foregoing instance, plurality with unity, it is the nominative case to a verb singular. "In the beginning, GODS created the heavens and the earth." Of this form innumerable instances occur in the Old Testament. That the word is plural, is made certain by its being often joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs plural; and yet when it can mean nothing else than the true God, it is generally joined in its plural form with verbs singular. To render this still more striking, the Aleim are said to be Jehovah, and Jehovah the Aleim: thus in Psalm c, 3, "Know ye, that *Jehovah*, he, the *Aleim*, he hath made us, and not we ourselves." And in the passage before given, "Jehovah our ALEIM, (*Gods*,) is one Jehovah." אל, AL, the mighty one, another name of God, has its plural אלים, ALIM, the mighty ones. The former is rendered by Trommius Θεος, the latter Θεοι. אביר, ABIR, the potent one, has the plural אבירים, ABIRIM, the potent ones. Man did eat the bread of the *Abirim*, "angels' food," conveys no idea; the manna was the bread provided miraculously, and was therefore called the food

(4) Maimonides tells us, that it was not lawful to utter this name, except in the sanctuary, and by the priests. "Nomen, quod, ut nosti, non proferre licet, nisi in sanctuario, et a sacerdotibus Dei sanctis, solum in benedictione sacerdotum, ut et a sacerdote magno in die jejunii."

of the powerful ones, of them who have power over all nature, the *one* God.

אֲדֹנִים, ADONIM, is the plural form of אָדוֹן, Adon a governor. "If I be *Adonim*, *masters*, where is my fear?" Mal. i, 6. Many other instances might be given, as, "Remember thy *Creators* in the days of thy youth." "The knowledge of the *Holy Ones* is understanding." "There be *higher* than they." Heb. *High Ones*; and in Daniel, "the *Watchers* and the *Holy Ones*."

Other plural forms of speech also occur when the *one* true God only is spoken of. "And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* own image, after *our* likeness." "And the LORD God said, Behold the man is become like *one of us*." "And the LORD said, Let *us* go down."—"Because there GOD appeared to him." Heb. *God they appeared*, the verb being plural. These instances need not be multiplied: they are the common forms of speech in the sacred Scriptures, which no criticism has been able to resolve into mere idioms, and which only the doctrine of a plurality of persons in the unity of the Godhead can satisfactorily explain. If they were mere idioms, they could not have been misunderstood by those to whom the Hebrew tongue was native, to imply plurality; but of this we have sufficient evidence, which shall be adduced when we speak of the faith of the Jewish Church. They have been acknowledged to form a striking singularity in the Hebrew language, even by those who have objected to the conclusion drawn from them; and the question, therefore, has been to find an hypothesis, which should account for a peculiarity, which is found in no other language, with the same circumstances. (5)

Some have supposed angels to be associated with God when these plural forms occur. For this there is no foundation in the texts themselves, and it is beside a manifest absurdity. Others, that the style of royalty was adopted, which is refuted by two considerations—that almighty God in other instances speaks in the singular and not in the plural number; and that this was not the style of the sovereigns of the earth when Moses or any of the sacred penmen composed their writings; no instance of it being found in any of the inspired books. A third opinion is, that the plural form of speaking of God was adopted by the Hebrews from their ancestors, who were polytheists, and that the ancient thec-

(5) The argument for the trinity drawn from the plural appellations given to God in the Hebrew Scriptures, was opposed by the younger Buxtorf; who yet admits that this argument should not altogether be rejected among Christians, "for upon the same principle on which not a few of the Jews refer this emphatical application of the plural number to a plurality of powers or of influences, or of operations, that is, *ad extra*; why may we not refer it, *ad intra*, to a plurality of persons and to personal works? *Yea, who certainly knows* what that was which the ancient Jews understood by this plurality of powers and faculties?"

ogical term was retained after the unity of God was acknowledged. This assumes what is totally without proof, that the ancestors of the Hebrews were polytheists; and could that be made out, it would leave it still to be accounted for, why other names of the Deity equally ancient, for any thing that appears to the contrary, are not also plural, and especially the high name of Jehovah; and why, more particularly the very appellation in question, *Aleim*, should have a singular form also, אלה in the same language. The grammatical reasons which have been offered are equally unsatisfactory. If then no hypothesis explains this peculiarity, but that which concludes it to indicate that mode of the Divine existence which was expressed in later theology by the phrase, a trinity of persons, the inference is too powerful to be easily resisted, that these plural forms must be considered as intended to intimate the plurality of persons in essential connection with one supreme and adorable Deity.

This argument, however, taken alone, powerful as it has often been justly deemed, does not contain the strength of the case. For natural as it is to expect, presuming this to be the mode of the Divine existence, that some of his *names* which, according to the expressive and simple character of the Hebrew language, are descriptions of *realities*, and that some of the modes of expression adopted even in the earliest revelations, should carry some intimation of a *fact*, which. as essentially connected with redemption, the future complete revelation of the redeeming scheme was intended fully to unfold; yet, were these plural titles and forms of construction blotted out, the evidence of a plurality of Divine persons in the Godhead would still remain in its strongest form. For that evidence is not merely, that God has revealed himself under plural appellations, nor that these are constructed with sometimes singular and sometimes plural forms of speech; but that *three* persons, and three persons *only* are spoken of in the Scriptures under Divine titles, each having the peculiar attributes of Divinity ascribed to him; and yet that the first and leading principle of the same book, which speaks thus of the character and works of these persons, should be, *that there is but* ONE *God*. This point being once established, it may be asked which of the hypotheses, the orthodox, the Arian, or the Socinian, agrees best with this plain and explicit doctrine of Holy Writ. *Plain* and *explicit*, I say, not as to the mode of the Divine existence, not as to the comprehension of it, but as to this particular, that the doctrine itself is plainly stated in the Scriptures.

Let this point then be examined, and it will be seen even that the very number *three* has this pre-eminence; that the application of these names and powers is restrained to it, and never strays beyond it; and that those who confide in the testimony of God, rather than in the opinions of men, have sufficient Scriptural reason to distinguish their faith from the unbelief of others by avowing themselves *Trinitarians*. (6)

(6) The word τριας, *trinitas*, came into use in the second century.

The solemn form of benediction, in which the Jewish high priests were commanded to bless the children of Israel, has in it this peculiar indication, and singularly answers to the form of benediction so general in the close of the apostolic epistles, and which so appropriately closes the solemn services of Christian worship. It is given in Numbers vi. 24–27.

> Jehovah bless thee and keep thee:
> Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
> Jehovah lift his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

If the three members of this form of benediction be attentively considered, they will be found to agree respectively to the three persons taken in the usual order of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is the author of *blessing* and *preservation*, *illumination* and *grace* are from the Son, *illumination* and *peace* from the Spirit, the teacher of truth and the Comforter. (*Vide Jones's Catholic Doctrine.*)

"The first member of the formula expresses the benevolent 'love of God;' the father of mercies and fountain of all good: the second well comports with the redeeming and reconciling 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;' and the last is appropriate to the purity, consolation, and joy, which are received from the 'communion of the Holy Spirit.'" (*Smith's Person of Christ.*)

The connection of certain specific blessings in this form of benediction with the Jehovah mentioned three times distinctly, and those which are represented as flowing from the Father, Son, and Spirit in the apostolic form, would be a singular coincidence if it even stood alone; but the light of the same eminent truth, though not yet fully revealed, breaks forth from other partings of the clouds of the early morning of revelation.

The inner part of the Jewish sanctuary was called the *holy of holies*, that is, the holy place of the *Holy Ones;* and the number of these is indicated, and limited to *three*, in the celebrated vision of Isaiah, and that with great explicitness. The scene of that vision is the holy place of the temple, and lies therefore in the very abode and residence of the *Holy Ones*, here celebrated by the seraphs who veiled their faces before them. And one cried unto another, and said, "*Holy, holy, holy* is the Lord of hosts." This passage, if it stood alone, might be eluded by saying that this act of *Divine* adoration here mentioned, is merely *emphatic*, or in the Hebrew mode of expressing a *superlative;* though that is assumed, and by no means proved. It is however worthy of serious notice, that this distinct *trine* act of adoration, which has been so often supposed to mark a plurality of persons as the objects of it, is answered by a voice from that excellent glory which overwhelmed the mind of the prophet when he was favoured with the vision, responding in the same language

of plurality in which the doxology of the seraphs is expressed. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" But this is not the only evidence that in this passage the *Holy Ones*, who were addressed each by his appropriate and equal designation of *holy*, were the *three* Divine subsistences in the Godhead. The being addressed is the "Lord of hosts." This all acknowledge to include the *Father;* but the Evangelist John, xii, 41, in manifest reference to this transaction, observes, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his (Christ's) glory and spake of him." In this vision, therefore, we have the *Son* also, whose glory on this occasion the prophet is said to have beheld. Acts xxviii, 25, determines that there was also the presence of the Holy Ghost. "Well spake the *Holy Ghost* by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear and not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive," &c. These words, quoted from Isaiah, the Apostle Paul declares to have been spoken by the Holy Ghost, and Isaiah declares them to have been spoken on this very occasion by the "Lord of hosts." "And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed and understand not, and see ye indeed but perceive not," &c.

Now let all these circumstances be placed together—THE PLACE, the holy place of the Holy Ones; the repetition of the homage, THREE times, Holy, holy, holy—the ONE Jehovah of hosts, to whom it was addressed, —the plural pronoun used by this ONE Jehovah, US; the declaration of an evangelist, that on this occasion Isaiah saw the glory of CHRIST; the declaration of St. Paul, that the Lord of hosts who spoke on that occasion was the HOLY GHOST; and the conclusion will not appear to be without most powerful authority, both circumstantial and declaratory, that the adoration, Holy, holy, holy, referred to the Divine three, in the one essence of the Lord of hosts. Accordingly, in the book of Revelations, where "*the Lamb*" is so constantly represented as sitting upon the Divine throne, and where he by name is associated with the Father, as the object of the *equal* homage and praise of saints and angels; this scene from Isaiah is transferred into the fourth chapter, and the "living creatures," the seraphim of the prophet, are heard in the same strain, and with the same *trine* repetition, saying, "*Holy, holy, holy*, Lord God Almighty, which *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*." Isaiah, xlviii, 16, also makes this threefold distinction and limitation. "And now the *Lord God*, and *his Spirit*, hath sent *me*." The words are manifestly spoken by Messiah, who declares himself sent by the *Lord God*, and by *his Spirit*. Some render it, hath sent *me* and his *Spirit*, the latter term being also in the accusative case. This strengthens the application, by bringing the phrase nearer to that so often used by our Lord in his discourses, who speaks of *himself* and the *Spirit*, being *sent* by the Father. "The Father which *sent* me—the Comforter whom I will *send* unto you from

the Father, who proceedeth from the Father." Isaiah xxxiv, 16, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, for MY mouth it hath commanded, and HIS SPIRIT it hath gathered them." "Here is one person speaking of *the Spirit, another* person." (*Jones on the Trinity.*) Hag. ii, 5, 7, "I am with you, saith the *Lord of hosts*, according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so *my Spirit* remaineth among you; fear ye not. For thus saith the *Lord of hosts*, I will shake all nations, and the *Desire* of all nations shall come." Here also we have three persons distinctly mentioned; the Lord of hosts, his *Spirit*, and the *Desire* of all nations.

Many other passages might be given, in which there is this change of persons, sometimes enumerating two, sometimes three, but never *more than three*, arrayed in these eminent and Divine characters. The passages in the New Testament are familiar to every one: "Baptizing them in the name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*." "The grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*," with others in which the sacred *three*, and *three only*, are thus collocated as objects of *equal* trust and honour, and *equally* the *fountain* and the *source* of grace and benediction.

On the celebrated passage in 1 John v, 7, "There are three that bear record in heaven," I say nothing, because authorities against its genuineness are found in the ranks of the orthodox, and among those who do not captiously make objections; and because it would scarcely be fair to adduce it as a proof, unless the arguments on each side were exhibited, which would lead to discussions which lie beside the design of this work, and more properly have their place in separate and distinct treatises. The recent revival of the inquiry into the genuineness of this text, however, shows that the point is far from being *critically* settled against the passage, as a true portion of Holy Writ, and the argument from the context is altogether in favour of those who advocate it, the *hiatus* in the sense never having been satisfactorily supplied by those who reject it. This is of more weight in arguments of this kind than is often allowed. As to the *doctrine* of the text, it has elsewhere abundant proof.

It has now been shown, that while the unity of God is to be considered a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, laid down with the utmost solemnity, and guarded with the utmost care, by precepts, by threatenings, by promises, by tremendous punishments of polytheism and idolatry among the Jews, the very names of God, as given in the revelation made of himself, have plural forms and are connected with plural modes of speech; that other indications of plurality are given in various parts of Holy Writ; and that this plurality is restricted to *three*. On those texts, however, which in their terms denote a plurality and a trinity, the proof does not wholly or chiefly rest, and they have been

only adduced as introductory to instances too numerous to be all examined, in which *two* distinct persons are spoken of, sometimes connectedly and sometimes separately, as associated with God in his perfections and incommunicable glories, and as performing works of unequivocal Divine majesty and infinite power, and thus together manifesting that *tri-unity* of the Godhead which the true Church has in all ages adored and magnified. This is the great proof upon which the doctrine rests. The first of these two persons is the *Son*, the second the *Spirit*. Of the former, it will be observed that the titles of Jehovah, Lord, God, King, King of Israel, Redeemer, Saviour, and other names of God, are ascribed to him,—that he is invested with the attributes of eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, infinite wisdom, holiness, goodness, &c,—that he was the Leader, the visible King, and the object of the worship of the Jews,—that he forms the great subject of prophecy, and is spoken of in the predictions of the prophets in language, which if applied to men or to angels would by the Jews have been considered not as sacred but idolatrous, and which, therefore, except that it agreed with their ancient faith, would totally have destroyed the credit of those writings,—that he is eminently known both in the Old Testament and in the New, as the Son of God, an appellative which is sufficiently proved to have been considered as implying an assumption of Divinity by the circumstance that, for asserting it, our Lord was condemned to die as a blasphemer by the Jewish sanhedrim,—that he became incarnate in our nature,—wrought miracles by his own original power, and not, as his servants, in the name of another,—that he authoritatively forgave sin,—that for the sake of his sacrifice, sin is forgiven to the end of the world, and for the sake of that alone,—that he rose from the dead to seal all these pretensions to Divinity,—that he is seated upon the throne of the universe, all power being given to him in heaven and in earth,—that his inspired apostles exhibit him as the Creator of all things visible and invisible; as the true God and the eternal life; as the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God and our Saviour,—that they offer to him the highest worship,—that they trust in him, and command all others to trust in him for eternal life,—that he is the head over all things,—that angels worship him and render him service,—that he will raise the dead at the last day,—judge the secrets of men's hearts, and finally determine the everlasting state of the righteous and the wicked.

This is the outline of Scriptural testimony as to the *Son*. As to the Divine character of the Spirit, it is equally explicit. He too is called Jehovah; Jehovah of hosts; God. Eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, infinite wisdom, and other attributes of Deity, are ascribed to him. He is introduced as an agent in the work of the creation, and to him is ascribed the conservation of all living beings. He is the source of the inspiration of prophets and apostles; the object of worship; the efficient agent

in illuminating, comforting, and sanctifying the souls of men. He makes intercession for the saints; quickens the dead, and, finally, he is associated with the Father and the Son, in the form of baptism into the *one name* of God, and in the apostolic form of benediction, as equally with them the source and fountain of grace and blessedness. These decisive points I shall proceed to establish by the express declarations of various passages, both of the Old and New Testament. When that is done, the argument will then be, that as on the one hand the doctrine of Scripture is, that there is but *one* GOD; and, on the other, that throughout both Testaments, *three* persons are, in unequivocal language, and by unequivocal circumstances, declared to be *Divine;* the only conclusion which can harmonize these otherwise *opposite, contradictory,* and most *misleading* propositions, and declarations, is, that the THREE PERSONS ARE ONE GOD.

In the prevalent faith of the Christian Church, neither of these views is for a moment lost sight of. Thus it exactly harmonizes with the Scriptures, nor can it be charged with greater mystery than is assignable to them. The trinity is asserted, but the unity is not obscured; the unity is confessed, but without denial of the trinity. No figures of speech, no unnatural modes of interpretation are resorted to, to reconcile these views with human conceptions, which they must infinitely transcend. This is the character of the heresies which have arisen on this subject. They all spring from the attempt to make this mystery of God conceivable by the human mind, and less a stone of stumbling to the pride of reason. On the contrary, "the faith of God's elect," as embodied in the creeds and confessions of all truly evangelical Churches follow the example of the Scriptures in entirely overlooking these low considerations, and "declaring the thing as it is," with all its mystery and incomprehensibleness, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It declares "that we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance; for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God." (*Athanasian Creed.*) Or, as it is well expressed by an eminent modern, as great a master of reason and science as he was of theology: "There is one Divine nature or essence, common unto three persons, incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every Divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual existence of one in all, and all in one, a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the

communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and a Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence. These are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree; but ought not to stagger our faith in asserting that they are true; for if the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us, that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three persons of the blessed trinity, the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the same Divine attributes, the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honours, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid to them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery." (*Dr. Barrow's Defence of the Trinity.*)

One observation more, before we proceed to the Scriptural evidence of the positions above laid down, shall close this chapter. The proof of the doctrine of the trinity, I have said, grounds itself on the firm foundation of the Divine *unity*, and it closes with it; and this may set the true believer at rest, when he is assailed by the sophistical enemies of his faith with the charge of dividing his regards, as he directs his prayers to one or other of the three persons of the Godhead. For the time at least, he is said to honour one to the exclusion of the others. The true Scriptural doctrine of the unity of God, will remove this objection. It is not the Socinian notion of unity. Theirs is the unity of *one*, ours the unity of *three*. We do not, however, as they seem to suppose, think the Divine essence *divisible*, and *participated* by, and *shared among*, three persons; but wholly and undividedly *possessed* and *enjoyed*. Whether, therefore, we address our prayers and adorations to the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, we address the *same adorable Being, the one living and true God.* "Jehovah, our Aleim, is one Jehovah." With reference to the relations which each person bears to us in the redeeming economy, our approaches to the Father are to be made through the mediation of the Son, and by, or with dependence upon, the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Yet, as the authority of the New Testament shows, this does not preclude *direct* prayer to Christ and to the Holy Spirit, and *direct* ascriptions of glory and honour to each. In all this we glorify the one "*God* over all, blessed for evermore."

CHAPTER X.

TRINITY—*Pre-existence of Christ.*

BY establishing, on Scriptural authority, the pre-existence of our Lord, we take the first step in the demonstration of his absolute Divinity. His pre-existence, indeed, simply considered, does not evince his Godhead and is not, therefore, a proof against the Arian hypothesis; but it destroys the Socinian notion, that he was a man *only*. For since no one contends for the pre-existence of human souls, and if they did, the doctrine would be refuted by their own consciousness, it is clear, that if Christ existed before his incarnation, he is not a *mere* man, whatever his nature, by other arguments, may be proved to be.

This point has been felt to press so heavily upon the doctrine of the simple humanity of Christ, that both ancient and modern Socinians have bent against it all those *arts* of interpretation which, more than any thing else, show both the hopelessness of their cause, and the pertinacity with which they cling to oft and easily refuted error. I shall dwell a little on this point, because it will introduce some instances in illustration of the peculiar character of the Socinian mode of perverting the Scriptures.

The existence of our Lord prior to his incarnation might be forcibly argued from the declarations that he was "*sent* into the world;" that "he *came* in the flesh;" that "he *took part* of flesh and blood;" that he was "found in fashion as a man;" and other similar phrases. These are modes of speech which are used of no other person; which are never adopted to express the natural birth, and the commencement of the existence of ordinary men; and which Socinianism, therefore, leaves without a reason, and without an explanation, when used of Christ. But arguments drawn from these phrases are rendered wholly unnecessary, by the frequent occurrence of passages which explicitly declare his pre-existence, and by which the ingenuity of unsubmissive criticism has been always foiled; the interpretations given being too forced, and too unsupported, either by the common rules of criticism, or by the idioms of language, to produce the least impression upon any, not previously disposed to torture the word of God in order to make it subservient to an error.

The first of these proofs of the pre-existence of Christ is from the testimony of the Baptist, John i, 15, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for *he was before me*;" or as it is in verse 30, "After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was *before me*."

The Socinian exposition is, "The Christ, who is to begin his ministry after me has, by the Divine appointment, been preferred before me, because he is my chief or principal." Thus they interpret the last

clause "for he was before me," in the sense of *dignity*, and not of *time*, though St. John uses the same word to denote priority of time, in several places of his Gospel, "If the world hate you, you know that it hated me, *before* it hated you;" and ch. i, 41; viii, 7; xx, 4–8. If they take the phrase in the second clause ἔμπροσθεν μου γέγονεν in the sense of "preferred," then, by their mode of rendering the last clause, as Bishop Pearson has observed, "a thing is made the reason of itself, which is a great absurdity and a vain tautology."—"He is preferred before me, because he is my chief;" whereas by taking πρωτος μου in the sense of time, a reason for this preference is given. There is, however, another rendering of the second clause which makes the passage still more impracticable in the sense of the Socinians. Εμπροσθεν is never in the Septuagint or in the New Testament used for dignity or rank; but refers either to *place* or *time*, and if taken in the sense of time, the rendering will be, "He that cometh after me was before me;" and οτι, in the next clause, signifying "*certainly*," "*truly*," (*Schleusner sub voce*,) the last clause will be made emphatical, "*certainly*, he was before me," and is to be considered, not as giving a *reason* for the sentiment in the preceding clause, or as tautological, but as explanatory and impressive; a mode of speaking exceedingly natural when so great a doctrine, and so high a mystery was to be declared, that he who was born after John, was yet, in point of existence, before him;—"certainly, he was before me." This rendering of the second clause is adopted by several eminent critics; but whether this or the common version be preferred, the verb in the last clause, he WAS before me, sufficiently fixes πρωτος in the sense of priority of time. Had it referred to the rank and dignity of Christ, it would not have been, "he WAS," but "he IS before me," ἐστι not ην.

The passages which express that Christ *came down from heaven*, are next to be considered. He styles himself "the bread of God which *cometh down from heaven*.—The living bread which *came down from heaven*.—He that cometh *from above* is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he *that cometh from heaven is above all*;" and in his discourse with Nicodemus, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but *he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven*." In what manner are declarations so plain and unequivocal to be eluded, and by what arts are they to be interpreted, into *anything*? This shall be considered. Socinus and his early disciples in order to account for these phrases, supposed that Christ, between the time of his birth and entrance upon his office, was translated into heaven, and there remained some time, that he might see and hear those things which he was to publish in the world. This hypothesis, however, only proves the difficulty, or rather the impossibility of interpreting these passages so as to turn away their hostile aspect from the

errors of man. It is supported by no passage of Scripture, by no tradition, by no reason in the nature of the thing, or in the discourse. The modern Socinians, therefore, finding the position of their elder brethren untenable, resolve the whole into *figure*, the most convenient method of evading the difficulty, and tell us, that as we should naturally say, that a person who would become acquainted with the secret purposes of God, must ascend to heaven to converse with him, and return to make them known, so our Lord's words do not necessarily imply a literal ascent and descent, but merely this, "that he alone was admitted to an intimate knowledge of the Divine will, and was commissioned to reveal it to men." (*Belsham's Calm Inquiry.*)

In the passages quoted above, as declarations of the pre-existence of Christ, it will be seen that there are two phrases to be accounted for, —*ascending into heaven*,—and, *coming down from heaven*. The former is said to mean the being admitted to an intimate knowledge of the Divine counsels. But if this were the sense, it could not be true that "no man" had thus ascended but "the Son of man;" since Moses and all the prophets in succession had been admitted to "an intimate knowledge of the Divine counsels," and had been "commissioned" to reveal them. It is nothing to say that our Lord's acquaintance with the Divine counsels was more deep and comprehensive. The case is not stated *comparatively*, but *exclusively*,—"No man hath ascended into heaven but the Son of man;" no man, but himself, had been in heaven. (7) Allowing therefore the principle of the Socinian gloss, it is totally inapplicable to the text in question, and is in fact directly refuted by it.

But the principle is false, and it may be denied, that "to ascend into heaven" is a Hebrew phrase to express the knowledge of high and mysterious things. So utterly does this pretence fail, that not one of the passages they adduce in proof can be taken in any other than its literal meaning; and they are therefore, as are others, directly against them. Deut. xxx, 11, is first adduced. "Who shall go up for us into heaven and bring it unto us?" This we are told we must take *figuratively*; but then, unhappily for them, it is also immediately subjoined, "neither is it beyond the *sea*, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the *sea* for us?" If the ascent into heaven in the first clause is to be taken figuratively, then the going beyond the sea cannot be taken literally, and we shall still want a figurative interpretation for this part of the declaration of Moses respecting the law, which will not so easily be furnished. The same observation is applicable to Romans x, 6, in which there is an adaptation of the passage in Deuteronomy to the Gospel. "Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above," &c, words which have no meaning unless *place* be literally understood, and

(7) "No man, except myself, ever was in heaven" (*Pearce.*)

which show that the apostle, a sufficient judge of Hebrew modes of expression, understood, in its literal sense, the passage in Deuteronomy. A second passage to which they trust, is Prov. xxx, 4, "Who hath ascended and descended," but if what immediately follows be added, "who hath gathered the winds in his fists, who hath bound the waters in a garment," &c, it will be seen that the passage has no reference to the acquisition of knowledge by a servant of God, but expresses the various operations in nature carried on by God himself. "Who hath done this? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

In Baruch iii, 29, it is asked of wisdom, "Who hath gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds?" but it is here also added, "Or who hath gone over the *sea* for her?" Wisdom is, in this passage, clearly personified; a *place* of habitation is assigned her, which is to be sought out by those who would attain her. This apocryphal text, therefore, gives no countenance to the mystical notion of ascending into heaven, advanced by Socinian expositors.

If they then utterly fail to establish their forced and unnatural sense of ascending into heaven; let us examine whether they are more successful in establishing their opinion as to the meaning of "*coming down* from heaven." This, they say, means "to be commissioned to reveal the will of God to men;" (*Belsham's Calm Inquiry;*) but if so, the phrases, "to ascend up into heaven," and "to come down from thence," which are manifestly opposed to each other, lose all their opposition in the interpretation, which is sufficient to show, that it is, as to both, entirely gratuitous, arbitrary and contradictory. For, as Dr. Magee has acutely remarked, "it is observed by the editors of the Unitarian Version, and enforced with much emphasis by Mr. Belsham and Dr. Carpenter, that to 'ascend into heaven' signifies 'to become acquainted with the truths of God,' and that consequently the 'correlative' to this, (the *opposite* they should have said,) to 'descend from heaven,' must mean 'to bring and to discover those truths to the world.' (*Imp. Vers.* p. 208; *Calm Inq.* p. 48.) Now allowing those gentlemen all they wish to establish as to the first clause,—that *to go up into heaven* means *to learn and become acquainted with the counsels of God*,—what must follow then if they reasoned justly upon their own principles? Plainly this, that *to come down from heaven*, being precisely the *opposite* of the former, must mean *to unlearn, or to lose the knowledge of those counsels:* so that, so far from *bringing* and *discovering* those counsels to mankind, our Lord must have *disqualified* himself from bringing any. Had indeed 'ASCENDING into heaven' meant 'BRINGING the truth (any where) FROM men,' then 'DESCENDING from heaven' might justly be said to mean 'BRINGING it back to men.' Whatever, in short, ASCENDING may be supposed to signify in any *figure*, DESCENDING must signify the *opposite*.

if the figure be abided by: and therefore, if to ASCEND be to *learn*, to DESCEND must be to *unlearn*." (*Discourses on the Atonement.*)

It is farther fatal to this opinion that "if to come from heaven; to descend from heaven," &c, signify receiving a Divine commission to teach; or, more simply to communicate truth after it has been learned, it is never used with reference to Moses, or to any of the prophets, or Divinely appointed instruments who, from time to time, were raised up among the Jews. We may therefore conclude, that the meaning attached to these phrases by Socinian writers of the present day, who, in this respect, as in many others, have ventured to step beyond their predecessors who never denied their literal acceptation, was unknown among the Jews, and is a mere subterfuge to escape from the plain testimony of Holy Writ on a point so fatal to their scheme.

The next passage which may be quoted as expressing, in unequivocal terms, the pre-exisetnce of Christ, occurs John vi, 62, and is, if possible, still more out of the reach of that kind of criticism which has just been exhibited. The occasion, too, fixes the sense beyond all perversion. Our Lord had told the Jews that he was the bread of life, which *came down from heaven.* This the Jews understood *literally*, and therefore asked, "Is not this the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know, how is it then that he saith, *I came down from heaven?*" His disciples too so understood his words, for they also "murmured." But our Lord, so far from removing that impression, so far from giving them the most distant hint of a mode of meeting the difficulty like that resorted to by Socinian writers, strengthens the assertion, and makes his profession a stumbling block still more formidable, "Doth this offend you?" referring to what he had just said, that he had descended from heaven, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up WHERE HE WAS BEFORE." Language cannot be more explicit; though Mr. Belsham has ventured to tell us that this means, "What if I go farther out of your reach, and become more perplexing and mysterious!" And indeed perplexing and mysterious enough would be the words both of Christ and his apostles, if they required such criticisms for their elucidation.

The phrase to be "*sent* from God," they think they sufficiently avert, by urging that it is said of the Baptist, "There was a man *sent from God*, whose name was John." This, they urge, clearly evinces, "that to come from God is to be *commissioned* by him. If Jesus was sent from God, so was John the Baptist; if the former came down from heaven, so did the latter." This reasoning must be allowed to be fallacious, if it can be shown that it contradicts other scriptures. Now our Lord says, John vi, 46, "No one hath seen the Father, save he who is from God, he ουτος, hath seen the Father;" namely, this one person, for it is singular, and no one else hath seen the Father. Therefore, if Christ was that person, as will not be disputed, John could not be "sent

from God," in the same *manner* that Christ was. What does the Baptist say of himself? Does he confirm the Socinian gloss? Speaking of Christ and of himself he says, "He that *cometh from above* is above all; he that is *of the earth* is *earthly*, he that cometh from heaven is above all," John iii, 31. Here John contrasts his earthly origin with Christ's heavenly origin. Christ is "from above;" John from "the earth," εκ της γης. Christ is "above all," which he could not be, if every other prophet came in like manner from heaven, and from above; and therefore if John was "sent from God," it cannot be in the same sense that Christ was sent from him, which is enough to silence the objection. (*Holden's Scripture Testimonies.*) Thus, says Dr. Nares, "we have nothing but the positive contradictions of the Unitarian party, to prove to us that Christ did not come from heaven, though he says of himself, he did come from heaven; that though he declares he had seen the Father, he had not seen the Father; that though he assures us that he, in a most *peculiar* and *singular* manner came forth from God, (εκ τε Θεε εξηλθον, a strong and singular expression,) he came from him no otherwise than like the prophets of old, and his own immediate forerunner." (*Remarks on the Imp. Version.*)

Several other equally striking passages might claim our attention; but it will be sufficient for the argument, to close it with two.

"Before Abraham was, I am," John viii, 58. Whether the verb ειμι "*I am*," may be understood to be equivalent to the incommunicable name Jehovah, shall be considered in another place. The obvious sense of the passage at least is, "Before Abraham was, or was born, I was in existence." Abraham, the patriarch, was the person spoken of; for the Jews having said, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" our Lord declares, with his peculiarly solemn mode of introduction, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." I had priority of existence, "together with a continuation of it to the present time." (*Pearson on the Creed.*) Nor did the Jews mistake his meaning, but being filled with indignation at so manifest a claim of Divinity, "they took up stones to stone him."

How then do the Socinians dispose of this passage? The two hypotheses on which they have rested, for one would not suffice, are, *first*, "That Christ existed before the patriarch Abraham had become, according to the import of his name, the father of many nations, that is, before the Gentiles were called;" which was as true of the Jews who were discoursing with him, as of himself. The *second* is, "before Abraham was born I am *he*, i. e. the Christ, in the destination and appointment of God;" which also was saying nothing peculiar of Christ; since the existence and the part which every one of his hearers was to act, were as much in the destination and appointment of God as his own. Both these absurdities are well exposed by Bishop Pearson:—

"The first interpretation makes our Saviour thus to speak:—Do ye so much wonder how I should *have seen Abraham*, who am *not yet fifty years old?* Do ye imagine so great a contradiction in this? I tell you, and be ye most assured that what I speak unto you at this time is most certainly and infallibly true, and most worthy of your observation which moves me not to deliver it without this solemn asseveration, (*Verily, verily, I say unto you,*) before *Abraham* shall perfectly become that which was signified in his name, *the father of many nations*, before the Gentiles shall come in, *I am*. Nor be ye troubled at this answer, or think in this I magnify myself; for what I speak is as true of you yourselves as it is of me: before *Abram* be thus made *Abraham*, *ye are*. Doubt ye not, therefore, as ye did, nor ever make that question again whether I have seen *Abraham*."

"The second explication makes a sense of another nature, but with the same impertinency:—Do ye continue still to question, and with so much admiration do ye look upon my age and ask, *Hast thou seen Abraham?* I confess it is more than eighteen hundred years since that patriarch died, and less than forty since I was born at Bethlehem: but look not on this computation, for before *Abraham* was born I *was*. But mistake me not, I mean that I was in the *foreknowledge* and *decree* of God. Nor do I magnify myself in this, for *ye also* were so. How either of these answers should give any reasonable satisfaction to the question, or the least occasion of the *Jews'* exasperation, is not to be understood. And that our Saviour should speak of any such impertinencies as these interpretations bring forth, is not by a Christian to be conceived. Wherefore, as the plain and most obvious sense is a proper and full answer to the question, and most likely to exasperate the unbelieving JEWS; as those strained explications render the words of Christ not only impertinent to the occasion, but vain and useless to the hearers of them; as our Saviour gave this answer in words of another language, most probably incapable of any such interpretations; we must adhere unto that literal sense already delivered, by which it appeareth *Christ* had a being, as before *John*, so also before *Abraham*, and consequently by that he did exist two thousand years before he was born, or conceived by the virgin." (*Exposition of the Creed.*)

The observations of Whitaker on this decisive passage, are in his usual energetic manner:—

"'Your Father Abraham,' says our Saviour to the Jews, 'rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.' Our Saviour thus proposes himself to his countrymen, as their Messiah; that grand object of hope and desire to their fathers, and particularly to this first father of the faithful, Abraham. But his countrymen, not acknowledging his claim to the character of Messiah, and therefore not allowing his supernatural priority of existence to Abraham, chose to consider his words in a sig-

nification merely human. 'Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' But what does our Saviour reply to this low and and gross comment upon his intimation? Does he retract it, by warping his language to their poor perverseness, and so waiving his pretensions to the assumed dignity? No! to have so acted, would have been derogatory to *his* dignity, and injurious to *their* interests. He actually repeats his claim to the character. He actually enforces his pretensions to a supernatural priority of existence. He even heightens both. He mounts up far beyond Abraham. He ascends beyond all the orders of creation. And he places himself with God at the head of the universe. He thus arrogates to himself all that high pitch of dignity, which the Jews expected their Messiah to assume. This he does too in the most energetic manner, that his simplicity of language, so natural to inherent greatness, would possibly admit. He also introduces what he says, with much solemnity in the form, and with more in the repetition. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you,' he cries, 'BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM.' He says not of himself, as he says of Abraham, 'Before he was, I was.' This indeed would have been sufficient, to affirm his existence previous to Abraham. But it would not have been sufficient, to declare what he *now* meant to assert, his full claim to the majesty of the Messiah. He therefore drops all forms of language, that could be accommodated to the mere creatures of God. He arrests one, that was appropriate to the Godhead itself. 'Before Abraham *was*,' or still more properly, 'Before Abraham was MADE,' he says, 'I AM.' He thus gives himself the signature of *uncreated* and *continual* existence, in direct opposition to *contingent* and *created*. He says of himself,

That an eternal now for ever lasts,

with him. He attaches to himself that very stamp of *eternity*, which God appropriates to his Godhead in the Old Testament; and from which an apostle afterward describes 'Jesus Christ' expressly, to be 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' Nor did the Jews pretend to misunderstand him now. They could not. They heard him directly and decisively vindicating the noblest rights of their Messiah, and the highest honours of their God, to himself. They considered him as a mere pretender to *those*. They therefore looked upon him, as a blasphemous arrogator of *these*. 'Then took they up stones, to cast at him' as a blasphemer; as what indeed he was in his pretensions to be God, if he had not been in reality their Messiah and their God in one. But he instantly proved himself to their very senses, to be both; by exerting the energetic powers of his Godhead, upon them. For he '*hid* himself; and went out of the temple, *going through the midst of them*, and so passed by.'"

The last passage which I shall quote, may properly, both from its

dignity and explicitness, close the whole. John xvii, 5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*" Whatever this glory was, it was possessed by Christ before the world was; or, as he afterward expresses it, "before the foundation of the world." That question is therefore not to be confounded with the main point which determines the pre-existence of our Lord; for if he was with the Father, and had a glory with him before the world was, and of which "he emptied himself" when he became man, then he had an existence, not only before his incarnation, but before the very "foundation of the world." The Socinian gloss is, "the glory which I had with thee, in thy immutable decree, before the world was; or which thou didst decree, before the world was, to give me." But η ειχον παρα σοι, "which I had with thee," cannot bear any such sense. The occasion was too peculiar to admit of any mystical, forced, or parabolic modes of speech. It was in the hearing of his disciples, just before he went out into the garden, that these words were spoken; and, as it has been well observed, it is remarkable, that he introduces the mention of this glory, when it was not necessary to complete the sense of any proposition. And yet, as if on purpose to prevent the apostles, who heard his prayer, from supposing that he was asking that which he had not possessed in any former period, he adds, "with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." So decisive is this passage, that as Dr. Harwood says, "Were there no intimation in the whole New Testament of the pre-existence of Christ, this single passage would irrefragably demonstrate and establish it. Our Saviour, here in a solemn act of devotion, declares to the Almighty, that he had glory with him before the world was, and fervently supplicates that he would be graciously pleased to re-instate him in his former felicity. The language is plain and clear. Every word has great moment and emphasis:—'*Glorify thou me with that glory which I enjoyed in thy presence, before the world was.*' Upon this single text I lay my finger. Here I posit my system. And if plain words be designedly employed to convey any determinate meaning; if the modes of human speech have any precision, I am convinced, that this plain declaration of our Lord, in an act of devotion, exhibits a great and important truth, which can never be subverted or invalidated by any accurate and satisfactory criticism." (*Socinian Scheme.*)

Whatever, therefore, the true nature of our Lord Jesus Christ may be, we have at least discovered from the plainest possible testimonies; testimonies which no criticism, and no unlicensed and paraphrastic comments have been able to shake or to obscure, that he had an existence previous to his incarnation, and previous to the very "foundation of the world." If then we find that the same titles and works which are ascribed to him in the New Testament, are ascribed to a Divine person in the Old.

who is yet represented as distinct from God the Father, and especially to one who was to come into the world to fulfil the very offices which our Lord has actually fulfilled, we shall have obtained another step in this inquiry, and shall have exhibited lofty proof, not only of the pre-existence of Christ, but also of his Divinity. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

TRINITY.—*Jesus Christ the Jehovah of the Old Testament.*

IN reading the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is impossible not to mark with serious attention the frequent visible appearances of God to the patriarchs and prophets; and, what is still more singular, his visible residence in a cloud of glory, both among the Jews in the wilderness and in their sacred tabernacle and temple.

The fact of such appearances cannot be disputed; they are allowed by all, and in order to point out the bearing of this fact upon the point at issue, the Divinity of Christ, it is necessary,

1. To show that the person who made these appearances, was truly a *Divine person.*

The proofs of this are, that he bears the names of Jehovah, God, and other Divine appellations; and that he dwelt among the Israelites as the object of their supreme worship; the worship of a people, the first precept of whose law was, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." The proofs are copious, but quotations shall not be needlessly multiplied.

When the Angel of the Lord found Hagar in the wilderness, "she called the name of JEHOVAH that spake to her, Thou God seest me."—JEHOVAH appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre. Abraham lifted up his eyes, and three *men*, three persons in human form, "stood by him." One of the three is called Jehovah. And JEHOVAH said, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?" Two of the three depart, but he to whom this high appellation is given remains, "but Abraham stood yet before JEHOVAH." This Jehovah is called by Abraham in the conversation which followed, "the Judge of all the earth;" and the account of the solemn interview is thus closed by the historian, "the Lord (Jehovah) went his way as soon as he had left off communing with Abraham." Appearances of the same personage occur to Isaac and to Jacob, under the name of "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac." After one of these manifestations, Jacob says, "I have seen God face to face;" and at another, "Surely the Lord (JEHOVAH) is in this place." The same Jehovah was made visible to Moses, and gave him his commission, and God said, "I AM THAT I AM; thou shalt say

to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." The same JEHOVAH went before the Israelites by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire; and by him the law was given amidst terrible displays of power and majesty from Mount Sinai. "I am the Lord (JEHOVAH) thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, thou shalt have no other Gods before me, &c. Did ever people hear the voice *of God*, speaking out of the midst of the fire as thou hast heard and live?" This same personage commanded the Israelites to build him a sanctuary, that he might reside among them; and when it was erected he took possession of it in a visible form, which was called "the glory of the Lord." There the SHECHINAH, the visible token of the presence of Jehovah, rested above the ark; there he was consulted on all occasions, and there he received their worship from age to age. Sacrifices were offered; sin was confessed and pardoned by him; and the book of Psalms is a collection of the hymns which were sung to his honour in the tabernacle and temple services, where he is constantly celebrated as JEHOVAH the God of Israel; the "*Jehovah*, God of their fathers;" and the object of their own exclusive *hope* and *trust:* all the works of creation are in those sublime compositions ascribed to him; and he is honoured and adored as the governor of all nations, and the sole ruler among the children of men. In a word, to mark his Divinity in the strongest possible manner, all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, "light and defence, grace and glory," are sought at his hands.

Thus the *same* glorious being, bearing the appellation of JEHOVAH, is seen as the object of the worship and trust of ages, and that under a visible manifestation; displaying attributes, engaged in operations, and assuming dignities and honours, which unequivocally array him with the majesty of absolute Divinity.

To this the objections which have been made, admit of a most satisfactory answer.

The first is, that this personage is also called "the Angel of the Lord." This is true; but if that Angel of the Lord is the same person as he who is called Jehovah; the same as he who gave the law in *his own name*, then it is clear that the term "Angel" does not indicate a created being, and is a designation not of *nature*, but of *office*, which will be just now accounted for, and is not at all inconsistent with his true and proper Divinity.

The collation of a few passages, or of the different parts of the same passages of Scripture, will show that Jehovah and "the Angel of the Lord," when used in this eminent sense, are the same person. Jacob says of Bethel, where he had exclaimed, "Surely *Jehovah* is in this place:" The *Angel* of God appeared to me in a dream, saying, I am the God of Bethel. Upon his death bed he gives the names of *God* and

Angel to this same person. "The *God* which fed me all my life long unto this day, the *Angel* which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.' So in Hosea, xii, 2, 5, it is said, "By his strength he had power with *God*, yea he had power over the *Angel* and prevailed." "We found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the *Lord God of hosts*, the Lord is his memorial." Here the same person has the names *God*, *Angel*, and *Lord God of hosts*. "The *Angel of the Lord* called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, by *myself* have I sworn saith the Lord, (Jehovah,) that since thou hast done this thing, in blessing I will bless thee." The *Angel of the Lord* appeared to Moses in a flame of fire; but this same Angel of the Lord "called to him out of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." To omit many other passages, St. Stephen, in alluding to this part of the history of Moses, in his speech before the council, says, "There appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, *An angel of the Lord* in a flame of fire," showing that that phraseology was in use among the Jews in his day, and that this Angel and Jehovah were regarded as the same being, for he adds, "Moses was in the Church in the wilderness with the *Angel* which spoke unto him in Mount Sinai." There is one part of the history of the Jews in the wilderness, which so fully shows that they distinguished this Angel of Jehovah from all created angels, as to deserve particular attention. In Exodus xxiii, 20, God makes this promise to Moses and the Israelites, "Behold I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." Of this Angel let it be observed, that he is here represented as the guide and protector of the Israelites; to him they were to owe their conquests and their settlement in the promised land, which are in other places often attributed to the *immediate* agency of God—that they are cautioned to "beware of him," to reverence and stand in dread of him—that the pardoning of transgressions belongs to him—finally, "that the *name* of God was in him." This *name* must be understood of God's own peculiar name, JEH 'AH, I AM, which he assumed as his distinctive appellation at his first appearing to Moses; and as the names of God are indicative of his nature, he who had a right to bear the peculiar name of God, must also have his essence. This view is put beyond all doubt by the fact, that Moses and the Jews so understood the promise; for afterward when their sins had provoked God to threaten not to go up with them *himself*, but to commit them to "an Angel who should drive out the Canaanite, &c," the people mourned over this as a great calamity, and Moses betook himself to special intercession, and rested not until he obtained the

repeal of the threat, and the renewed promise, "my *presence* shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." Nothing, therefore, can be more clear than that Moses and the Israelites considered the promise of the Angel, in whom was "the name of God," as a promise that God *himself* would go with them. With this uncreated Angel, his *presence* of the Lord, they were satisfied, but not with 'an angel" indefinitely, with an angel, not so by *office* only, as was the appearing Angel of the Old Testament, but who was by *nature* of that order of beings usually so called, and therefore a created being. At the news of God's determination not to go up with them, Moses hastens to the tabernacle to make his intercessions, and refusess an inferior conductor. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (8)

That the Angel of Jehovah is constantly represented as Jehovah himself, and therefore as a Divine person, is so manifest, that the means resorted to, to evade the force of the argument which so immediately flashes from it, acknowledge the fact. Those who deny the Divinity of our Lord, however, endeavour to elude the consequence according to their respective creeds. The Arians, who think the appearing angel to have been Christ, but who yet deny him to be Jehovah himself, assume that this glorious but created being personated the Deity, and as his ambassador and representative spoke by his authority, and took his name. Thus a modern Arian observes, "The Angel takes the name of Jehovah because it is a common maxim, *loquitur legatus sermone mittentis eum*, as an ambassador in the name of his king, or the *fecialis* when he denounced war in the name of the Roman people; and what is done by the Angel is said to be done by God, according to another maxim, *qui facit per alium, facit per se.*" (*Taylor, Ben Mordecai.*) The answer to this is, that though ambassadors speak in the name of their masters, they do not apply the names and titles of their masters to themselves,

(8) From this remarkable passage it appears to me very clear, that the Messenger or Angel of God, whom he here promises to be the leader of his people, is not a creature, much less Moses or Joshua, but an uncreated Angel. For (1) the clause, *He will not pardon your sins*, is not applicable to any created being, whether Angel or man: (2) The next words, *My name is in him*, cannot be explained to signify, he shall act in my name, that is, under my command or by authority received from me, for in that case another word, *he will act or he will speak*, or the like would have been added: (3) The same conclusion is established by a comparison of this passage with chapter xxxii, 34, (and xxxii, 2,) where God expresses his indignation against the Israelites for their idolatry, by declaring that not himself, but an angel, should be henceforth their guide: but this, the people and Moses most earnestly deprecate [as a calamity and a judgment, whereas the present instance is a promise of favour and mercy, and is so acknowledged in Isaiah lxii, 8.] "That angel, therefore, is perfectly different from him who is spoken of in this passage before us, who is the same that appeared to Moses, chapter iii, 2, and there likewise both speaks and acts as God himself." (*Dathii Pentateuchus.*)

(9)—that the unquestionably created angels, mentioned in Scripture as appearing to men, declare that they were sent by God, and never personate Him,—that the prophets uniformly declare their commission to be from God,—that God himself declares, "Jehovah is my name, and my glory *will I not give to another*,"—and yet that the appearing Angel calls himself, as we have seen, by this incommunicable name in almost innumerable instances, and that though the object of the Mosaic dispensation was to preserve men from idolatry, yet this Angel claims and receives the *exclusive* worship both of the patriarchs to whom he occasionally appeared, and the Jews among whom he visibly resided for ages. It is therefore a proposition too monstrous to be for a moment sustained, that a created being of any kind should thus allure men into idolatry, by acting the Deity, assuming his name, and attributing to himself God's peculiar and incommunicable perfections and honour. (1) The Arian hypothesis on this subject is well answered by even a Socinian writer. "The whole transaction on Mount Sinai shows that Jehovah was present, and acted, and not another for him. It is the God that had delivered them out of Egypt, with whom they were to enter into covenant as their God, and who thereupon accepted them as his people, who was the author of their religion and laws, and who himself delivered to them those ten commands, the most sacred part. There is nothing to lead us to imagine that the person, who was their God, did not speak in his own name; not the least intimation that here was another representing him." (*Lindsey's Apology.*)

The author of "the Essay on Spirit" attempts to meet this by alleging that "the Hebrews were far from being explicit and accurate in their style, and that it was customary for prophets and angels to speak in the name and character of God." The reply of Dr. Randolph is able and decisive, and as this is a point of great importance, its introduction will not appear unnecessary.

"Some, to evade these strong proofs of our Lord's Divinity, have asserted that this was only a created angel appearing in the name or person of the Father; it being customary in Scripture for one person to sustain the character, and act and speak in the name of another. But these assertions want proof. I find no instances of one person acting and speaking in the name of another, without first declaring in whose name

(9) "An earthly ambassador indeed represents the person of his prince, is supposed to be clothed with his authority, and speaks and acts in his name. But who ever heard of an ambassador assuming the very name of his sovereign, or being honoured with it by others? Would one in this character be permitted to say, *I George, I Louis, I Frederic?* As the idea is ridiculous, the action would justly be accounted high treason." (JAMIESON'S *Vindication.*)

(1) ——— histrioniam exercuisse, in qua Dei nomen assumat, et omnia quæ Dei sunt, sibi attribuat. (*Bishop Bull.*)

he acts and speaks. The instances usually alleged are nothing to the purpose. If we sometimes find an angel in the book of Revelation speaking in the name of God, yet from the context it will be easy to show that this angel was the great Angel, the Angel of the Covenant. But if there should be some instances, in the poetical or prophetical parts of Scripture, of an abrupt change of persons, where the person speaking is not particularly specified, this will by no means come up to the case before us. Here is a person sustaining the name and character of the most high God, from one end of the Bible to the other; bearing his glorious and fearful name, the incommunicable name Jehovah, expressive of his necessary existence; sitting in the throne of God; dwelling and presiding in his temple; delivering laws in his name; giving out oracles; hearing prayers; forgiving sins. And yet these writers would persuade us that this was only a tutelary angel; that a creature was the God of Israel, and that to this creature all their service and worship was directed; that the great God, 'whose name is Jealous,' was pleased to give his glory, his worship, his throne to a creature. What is this but to make the law of God himself introductory of the same idolatry that was practised by all the nations of the heathen? But we are told that bold figures of speech are common in the Hebrew language, which is not to be tied down in its interpretation to the severer rules of modern criticism. We may be assured that these opinions are indefensible, which cannot be supported without charging the word of God with want of propriety or perspicuity. Such pretences might be borne with, if the question were about a phrase or two in the poetical or prophetical parts of Scripture. But this, if it be a figure, is a figure which runs through the whole Scripture. And a bold interpreter must he be, who supposes that such figures are perpetually and uniformly made use of in a point of such importance, without any meaning at all. This is to confound the use of language, to make the Holy Scripture a mysterious unintelligible book, sufficient to prove nothing, or rather to prove any thing, which a wild imagination shall suggest." (*Randolph's Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity.*)

If the Arian account of the Angel of Jehovah be untenable, the Socinian notion will be found equally unsupported, and indeed ridiculous. Dr. Priestley assumes the marvellous doctrine of "occasional personality," and thinks that "in some cases angels were nothing more than *temporary appearances*, and no permanent beings; the mere organs of the Deity, assumed for the purpose of making himself known." He speaks therefore of "a *power* occasionally emitted, and then taken back again into its source;" of this *power* being vested with a *temporary personality*, and thinks this possible! Little cause had the doctor and his adherents to talk of the mystery and absurdity of the doctrine of three persons in one Godhead, who can make a *person* out of a *power*, emitted

and then drawn back again to its source; a *temporary person*, without individual subsistence! The wildness of this fiction is its own refutation; but that the Angel of Jehovah was not this temporary occasional person, produced or "emitted" for the occasion of these appearances, is made certain by Abraham's "*walking before* this Angel of the Lord," that is, ordering his life and conversation in his sight all the days of his life; by Jacob calling him the Angel of the Lord who had "fed him all his life long;" and by this also, that the same *person* who was called by himself and by the Jews "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," was the God of the chosen people in *all* their generations. Mr. Lindsey says "that the *outward token* of the presence of God is what is generally meant by the *Angel* of God, when not particularly specified and appropriated otherwise; that which manifested his appearance, whatever it was;" and this opinion commonly obtains among the Socinians. "The *Angel* of the Lord was the visible symbol of the Divine presence." (*Belsham.*) This notion, however, involves a whole train of absurdities. The term, the "Angel of Jehovah" is not at all accounted for by a visible symbol of clouds, light, fire, &c, unless that symbol be considered as distinct from Jehovah. We have then the name Jehovah given to a cloud, a light, a fire, &c; the fire is the *Angel of the Lord*, and yet the Angel of the Lord calls to Moses *out of the fire*. This visible symbol says to Abraham, "By MYSELF I have sworn," for these are said to be the words of the Angel of Jehovah; and this Angel, the visible symbol, spake to Moses on Mount Sinai: such are the absurdities which flow from error! Most clearly therefore is it determined on the testimony of several scriptures, and by necessary induction from the circumstances attending the numerous appearances of the Angel of Jehovah in the Old Testament, that the person thus manifesting himself, and thus receiving supreme worship, was not a created angel as the Arians would have it, nor a *meteor*, an *atmospheric appearance*, the worthy theory of modern Socinians, but that he was a DIVINE PERSON.

2. It will be necessary to show that this Divine person was not God the Father.

The following argument has been adopted in proof of this: "No man hath seen God at any time. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his shape. Not that any man hath seen the Father. It is however said in the Old Testament, that God frequently appeared under the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, and therefore we must conclude that the God who appeared was God the Son."

Plausible as this argument is, it cannot be depended upon; for that the Father never manifested himself to men, as distinct from the Son, is contradicted by two express testimonies. We have seen that the Angel, in whom was the name of God, promised as the conductor of the Israelites through the wilderness, was a Divine person. But he who promised

to "send him," must be a different person to the angel *sent*, and that person could be no other than the Father. "Behold, I send an angel before thee," &c. On this occasion, therefore, Moses heard the voice of the Father. Again, at the baptism of Jesus the voice of the Father was heard, declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The above passages must be therefore interpreted to accord with these facts. They express the pure spirituality and invisibility of God, and can no more be argued against a sensible manifestation of God by audible sounds, and appearances, than the declaration to Moses, "No man can see *my face* and live." There was an important sense in which Moses neither did nor could see God; and yet it is equally true, that he both saw him and heard him. He saw the "*backward parts*," but not the "*face* of God." (2)

The manifestation of the Father was however very rare; as appears from by far the greater part of these Divine appearances being expressly called appearances of *the Angel of the Lord*. The Jehovah who appeared to Abram in the case of Sodom was an *angel*. The Jehovah who appeared to Hagar, is said also to be "*the Angel of the Lord*." It was "*the Angel of Jehovah* from heaven" who sware by *himself* to Abraham, "In blessing I will bless thee." Jacob calls the "God of Bethel," that is, the God who appeared to him there, and to whom he vowed his vows, "*the Angel of God*." In blessing Joseph, he calls the God "in whose presence my fathers, Abraham and Isaac have walked," *the Angel* who had redeemed him from all evil. "I AM THAT I AM," when he spoke to Moses out of the bush, is termed *the Angel of Jehovah*. The God who spake these words and said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is called *the Angel* who spake to Moses in the Mount Sinai. The Being who dwelt in a fiery cloud, the visible token of the presence of God, and took up his residence over the ark, in the holiest place, and there received the constant worship of the Jews, is called *the Angel of the Lord*; and so in many other instances.

Nor is there any reason for stretching the point to exclude in all cases the visible or audible agency of the Father, from the Old Testament; no advantage in the least is gained by it, and it cannot be maintained without sanctioning by example the conduct of the opposers of truth, in giving forced and unnatural expositions to several passages of Scripture. This ought to be avoided, and a consistency of fair honest interpretation be maintained throughout. It is amply sufficient for the important argument with which we are now concerned, to prove, not that the Father was never manifested in his own person; but that the Angel of the Lord, whose appearances are so often recorded, is not the Father. This is clear from his appellation *angel*, with respect to which there can be

(2 Imperscrutabilem Dei essentiam et majestatem. (*Vatable.*)

but two interpretations. It is either a name descriptive of *nature* or of *office*. In the first view it is generally employed in the sacred Scriptures to designate one of an order of intelligences superior to man, and often employed in the service of man as the ministers of God, but still beings *finite* and *created*. We have however already proved that the Angel of the Lord is not a creature, and he is not therefore called an angel with reference to his *nature*. The term must then be considered as a term of *office*. He is called the *Angel* of the Lord, because he was the *messenger* of the Lord; because he was *sent* to execute his will, and to be his visible image and representative. His office therefore under this appellation was ministerial; but ministration is never attributed to the Father. He who was *sent* must be a distinct person from him *by whom* he was sent; the *messenger* from him whose *message* he brought, and whose *will* he performed. The Angel of Jehovah is therefore a different person from the Jehovah whose messenger he was, and yet the Angel himself is Jehovah, and, as we have proved, truly Divine. Thus does the Old Testament most clearly reveal to us, in the case of Jehovah and the Angel of Jehovah, *two Divine persons*, while it still maintains its great fundamental principle, that there is but *one God*.

3. The third step in this argument is, that the Divine person, called so often the Angel of Jehovah in the Old Testament, was the promised and future Christ, and consequently Jesus, the Lord and Saviour of the Christian Church.

We have seen, that it was the Angel of Jehovah who gave the law to the Israelites, and that in his own *name*, though still an *angel*, a *messenger* in the transaction; being at once servant and Lord, angel and Jehovah, circumstances which can only be explained on the hypothesis of his Divinity, and for which neither Arianism nor Socinianism can give any solution. He therefore was the person who made the covenant, usually called the Mosaic, with the children of Israel. The Prophet Jeremiah however expressly says, that the new covenant with Israel was to be made by the same person who had made the old. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that *I will make* a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that *I made* with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." The Angel of Jehovah, who led the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them their law, is here plainly introduced as the author of the new covenant. If then, as we learn from the Apostle Paul, this new covenant predicted by Jeremiah is the Christian dispensation, and Christ be its author; the Christ of the New Testament, and the Angel of Jehovah of the Old, are the same person.

Equally striking is the celebrated prediction in Malachi, the last of the prophets. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare

my way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

The characters under which the person who is the subject of this prophecy is described, are, the Lord, a sovereign Ruler, (3) the owner of the temple, and therefore a Divine prince or governor, he "shall come to *his temple.*" "The temple," says Bishop Horsley, "in the writings of a Jewish prophet, cannot be otherwise understood, according to the literal meaning, than of the temple at Jerusalem. Of this temple, therefore, the person to come is here expressly called the Lord. The lord of any temple, in the language of all writers, and in the natural meaning of the phrase, is the divinity to whose worship it is consecrated. To no other divinity the temple of Jerusalem was consecrated than the true and everlasting God, the Lord Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth. Here, then, we have the express testimony of Malachi, that the Christ, the Deliverer, whose coming he announces, was no other than the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Jehovah had delivered the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage; and the same Jehovah was to come in person to his temple, to effect the greater and more general deliverance of which the former was but an imperfect type."

He bears also the same title, angel or messenger, as he whose appearances in the Old Testament have been enumerated.

"The Messenger of the Covenant, therefore, is Jehovah's messenger; —if his *messenger*, his *servant;* for a message is a service: it implies a person sending, and a person sent. In the person who sendeth there must be authority to send,—submission to that authority in the person sent. The Messenger, therefore, of the Covenant, is the servant of the Lord Jehovah: but the same person who is the Messenger, is the Lord Jehovah himself, *not the same person* with the sender, but bearing *the same name;* because united in that mysterious nature and undivided substance which the name imports. The same person, therefore, is servant and Lord; and, by uniting these characters in the same person, what does the prophet but describe that great mystery of the Gospel, the union of the nature which governs, and the nature which serves,—the union of the Divine and human nature in the person of the Christ?" (*Horsley's Sermons.*)

Now this prophecy is expressly applied to Christ by St. Mark.— "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *as it is written,* Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." It follows from this, that Jesus is the Lord, the Lord of the temple, the Messenger of the Covenant mentioned in

(3) The same word is often applied to magistrates, and even fathers; but J H Michaelis says, that when it occurs as in this place with the prefix, it is appropriated only to God.

the prophecy; and bearing these exact characters of the appearing Angel Jehovah of the Old Testament, who was the *King* of the Jews; whose temple was HIS, because he resided in it, and so was called "the house of the Lord;" and who was "the *Messenger*" of *their Covenant*; the identity of the persons cannot be mistaken. One coincidence is singularly striking. It has been proved that the Angel Jehovah had his residence in the Jewish tabernacle and temple, and that he took possession, or came suddenly to both, at their dedication, and filled them with his glory. On one occasion Jesus himself, though in his state of humiliation, comes in public procession to the temple at Jerusalem, and calls it "his own," thus at once declaring that he was the ancient and rightful Lord of the temple, and appropriating to himself this eminent prophecy. Bishop Horsley has introduced this circumstance in his usual striking and convincing manner:—

"A third time Jesus came still more remarkably as the Lord to his temple, when he came up from Galilee to celebrate the last passover, and made that public entry at Jerusalem which is described by all the evangelists. It will be necessary to enlarge upon the particulars of this interesting story: for the right understanding of our Saviour's conduct upon this occasion depends so much upon seeing certain leading circumstances in a proper light,—upon a recollection of ancient prophecies, and an attention to the customs of the Jewish people,—that I am apt to suspect, few now-a-days discern in this extraordinary transaction what was clearly seen in it at the time by our Lord's disciples, and in some measure understood by his enemies. I shall present you with an orderly detail of the story, and comment upon the particulars as they arise: and I doubt not but that by God's assistance I shall teach you to perceive in this public entry of Jesus of Nazareth, (if you have not perceived it before,) a conspicuous advent of the great Jehovah to his temple.—Jesus, on his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, stops at the foot of Mount Olivet, and sends two of his disciples to a neighbouring village to provide an ass's colt to convey him from that place to the city, distant not more than half a mile. The colt is brought, and Jesus is seated upon it. This first circumstance must be well considered; it is the key to the whole mystery of the story. What could be his meaning in choosing this singular conveyance? It could not be that the fatigue of the short journey which remained was likely to be too much for him afoot; and that no better animal was to be procured. Nor was the ass in these days (though it had been in earlier ages an animal in high esteem in the east) used for travelling or for state by persons of the first condition,—that this conveyance should be chosen for the grandeur or propriety of the appearance. Strange as it may seem, the coming to Jerusalem upon an ass's colt was one of the prophetical characters of the Messiah; and the great singularity of it had perhaps been the reason

that this character had been more generally attended to than any other: so that there was no Jew who was not apprized that the Messiah was to come to the holy city in that manner. 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!' saith Zechariah; 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee! He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even a colt, the foal of an ass!' And this prophecy the Jews never understood of any other person than the Messiah. Jesus, therefore, by seating himself upon the ass's colt in order to go to Jerusalem, without any possible inducement either of grandeur or convenience, openly declared himself to be that King who was to come, and at whose coming in that manner Zion was to rejoice. And so the disciples, if we may judge from what immediately followed, understood this proceeding; for no sooner did they see their master seated on the colt, than they broke out into transports of the highest joy, as if in this great sight they had the full contentment of their utmost wishes; conceiving, as it should seem, the sanguine hope that the kingdom was this instant to be restored to Israel. They strewed the way which Jesus was to pass with the green branches of the trees which grew beside it; a mark of honour in the east, never paid but to the greatest emperors on occasions of the highest pomp. They proclaimed him the long-expected heir of David's throne,—the Blessed One coming in the name of the Lord; that is, in the language of Malachi, the Messenger of the Covenant: and they rent the skies with the exulting exclamation of 'Hosanna in the highest!' On their way to Jerusalem, they are met by a great multitude from the city, whom the tidings had no sooner reached than they ran out in eager joy to join his triumph. When they reached Jerusalem, 'the whole city,' says the blessed evangelist, 'was moved.' Here recollect, that it was now the season of the passover. The passover was the highest festival of the Jewish nation, the anniversary of that memorable night when Jehovah led his armies out of Egypt with a high hand and an extended arm,—'a night much to be remembered to the Lord of the children of Israel in their generations;' and much indeed it was remembered. The devout Jews flocked at this season to Jerusalem, not only from every corner of Judea, but from the remotest countries whither God had scattered them; and the numbers of the strangers that were annually collected in Jerusalem during this festival are beyond imagination. These strangers, who living at a distance knew little of what had been passing in Judea since their last visit, were they who were moved (as well they might be) with wonder and astonishment, when Jesus, so humble in his equipage, so honoured in his numerous attendants, appeared within the city gates; and every one asks his neighbour, 'Who is this?' It was replied by some of the natives of Judea,—but as I conceive, by none of the disciples; for any of them at this time would have given another answer,—it was replied

This is the Nazarene, the great prophet from Galilee.' Through the throng of these astonished spectators the procession passed by the public streets of Jerusalem to the temple, where immediately the sacred porticoes resound with the continued hosannas of the multitudes. The chief priests and scribes are astonished and alarmed: they request Jesus himself to silence his followers. Jesus, in the early part of his ministry, had always been cautious of any public display of personal consequence; lest the malice of his enemies should be too soon provoked, or the unadvised zeal of his friends should raise civil commotions. But now that his work on earth was finished in all but the last painful part of it, —now that he had firmly laid the foundations of God's kingdom in the hearts of his disciples,—now that the apostles were prepared and instructed for their office,—now that the days of vengeance on the Jewish nation were at hand, and it mattered not how soon they should incur the displeasure of the Romans their masters,—Jesus lays aside a reserve which could be no longer useful; and, instead of checking the zeal of his followers, he gives a new alarm to the chief priests and scribes, by a direct and firm assertion of his right to the honours that were so largely shown to him. 'If these,' says he, 'were silent, the stones of this building would be endued with a voice to proclaim my titles:' and then, as on a former occasion, he drove out the traders; but with a higher tone of authority, calling it his own house, and saying, 'My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.' You have now the story, in all its circumstances, faithfully collected from the four evangelists; nothing exaggerated, but set in order, and perhaps somewhat illustrated by an application of old propheeies, and a recollection of Jewish customs. Judge for yourselves whether this was not an advent of the Lord Jehovah taking personal possession of his temple." (*Horsley.*)

But it is not only in these passages that the name Jehovah, the appellation of the appearing Angel of the Old Testament, and other titles of Divinity, are given to Messiah; and if Jesus be Messiah, then are they his titles and as truly mark *his* Divinity.

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, (JEHOVAH,) make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord (JEHOVAH) shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." This being spoken of him of whom John the Baptist was to be the forerunner; and the application having been afterward expressly made by the Baptist to our Lord, it is evident that HE is the person "to whom the prophet attributes the incommunicable name of JEHOVAH, and styles him 'our God.'"—(*Wogan.*)

"Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the LORD by the prophet, saying. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name EMANUEL, which being interpreted is God with us." Here another prediction of Isaiah is expressly applied to Jesus. "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus, and he shall be great, and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." These are the words of the angel to Mary, and obviously apply to our Lord the words of Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and power there shall be no end, upon the throne of David to order and establish it for ever." It is unnecessary at present to quote more of those numerous passages which speak of the future Messiah under Divine titles, and which are applied to Jesus as that Messiah actually manifested. They do not in so many words connect the Angel of Jehovah with Jesus as the same person; but, taken with the passages above adduced, they present evidence of a very weighty character in favour of that position. A plurality of persons in the one Godhead is mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures; this plurality is restricted to *three;* one of them appears as the "acting God" of the patriarchal and Mosaic age; the prophets speak of a Divine person to come as the Messiah, bearing precisely the same titles; no one supposes this to be the Holy Ghost; it cannot be the Father, seeing that Messiah is God's servant and God's messenger; and the only conclusion is, that the Messiah predicted is he who is known under the titles, Angel, Son of God, Word of God, in the Old Testament; and if Jesus be that Messiah, he is that *Son*, that *Word*, that *Servant*, that *Messenger;* and bearing the same Divine characters as the Angel of Jehovah, is that Angel himself, and is entitled in the Christian Church to all the homage and worship which was paid to him in the Jewish.

There are, however, a few passages which in a still more distinct manner than any which have been introduced, except that from the prophecy of Jeremiah, identify Jesus Christ with the Angel of Jehovah in the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations; and a brief consideration of them will leave this important point completely established.

Let it then be recollected, that he who dwelt in the Jewish tabernacle, between the cherubim, was the *Angel Jehovah*. In Psalm lxviii, which was written on the removal of the ark to Mount Zion, he is expressly addressed. "This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in;" and again, "They have seen thy goings, O God, my King, in thy sanctuary." But the Apostle Paul, Eph. iv, 8, applies this psalm to

Christ, and considers this very *ascent* of the Angel Jehovah to Mount Zion as a prophetic type of the ascent of Jesus to the celestial Zion.– "*Wherefore* he saith, when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive," &c. The conclusion, therefore, is, that the Angel Jehovah who is addressed in the psalm, and Christ, are the same person. This is marked with equal strength in verse 29. The psalm, let it be observed, is determined by apostolical authority to be a prophecy of Christ, as indeed its terms intimate; and with reference to the future conquests of Messiah, the prophet exclaims, "Because of *thy temple* at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee." The future Christ is spoken of as one having then a temple at Jerusalem.

It was the glory of the Angel Jehovah, the resident God of the temple, which Isaiah saw in the vision recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy before adduced; but the Evangelist John expressly declares that on that occasion the prophet saw the glory of Christ and spake of him. Christ therefore was the Lord of hosts whose glory filled the temple.

St. Peter calls the Spirit of Jehovah, by which the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come, the Spirit of *Christ*." He also informs us that "Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited *in the days of Noah*, while the ark was preparing."— Now whatever may be the full meaning of this difficult passage, Christ is clearly represented as preaching by his Spirit in the days of Noah, that is, inspiring Noah to preach. Let this be collated with the declaration of Jehovah before the flood, "*My Spirit* shall not always strive with man, for that he is flesh, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years," during which period of delay and long suffering, Noah was made by him, from whom alone inspiration can come, a preacher of righteousness; and it is clear that Christ, and the appearing Jehovah of the antediluvian world, are supposed by St. Peter to have been the same person. In the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, Moses is said to have esteemed the *reproach of Christ* greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; a passage of easy interpretation, when it is admitted that the Jehovah of the Israelites, whose name and worship Moses professed, and Christ, were the same person. For this worship he was reproached by the Egyptians, who preferred their own idolatry, and treated, as all apostates do, the true religion, the pure worship of former ages from which they had departed, with contempt. To be reproached for the sake of Jehovah, and to be reproached for Christ, were convertible phrases with the apostle, because he considered Jehovah and Christ to be the same person.

"In St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, we read, 'Neither let

us tempt CHRIST, as some of them (that is, the Jews in the wilderness) also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents,' x, 9. The pronoun *him* αυτον, must be understood after 'tempted,' and it is found in some MSS., though not sufficiently numerous to warrant its insertion in the text. It is, however, *necessarily* implied, and refers to Christ just before mentioned. The Jews in the wilderness here are said to have tempted some person; and to understand by that person any other than Christ, who is just before named, is against all grammar, which never allows without absolute necessity any other accusative to be understood by the verb than that of some person or thing before mentioned in the same sentence. The conjunction και, *also* establishes this interpretation beyond doubt: 'Neither let us tempt CHRIST as some of them ALSO tempted'—tempted whom? The answer clearly is, as they also tempted *Christ*. If Christ then was the person whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness, he unavoidably becomes the Jehovah of the Old Testament." (4)

This is rendered the more striking, when the passage to which the apostle refers is given at length. "Ye shall not tempt the *Lord your God*, as ye tempted him in Massah." Now what could lead the apostle to substitute *Christ*, in the place of the Lord your God? "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them *also* tempted" *Christ*, for that is the accusative which must be supplied. Nothing certainly but that the idea was familiar to him, that Christ, and the Angel Jehovah, who conducted and governed the Israelites, were the same person.

Heb. xii, 25, 26: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised," &c.

This passage also is decisive as a proof that the Angel of Jehovah, and our Lord, are the same person. "*Him* that speaketh from heaven," the context determines to be Christ; "*him* that spake *on earth*," is probably Moses. The "voice" that then "shook the earth," was the voice of him that gave the law, at the sound of which the mountain trembled and shook. He who gave the law we have already proved, from the authority of Scripture, to have been the Angel of Jehovah, and the apostle declares that the same person now speaks to us "from heaven," in the Gospel, and is therefore the Lord Christ. Dr. Mac Knight says, that it was not *the Son's* voice which shook the earth, because it was not the Son who gave the law. In this he is clearly contradicted by St. Stephen, and the whole Jewish history. The proto-martyr in his

(4) Holden's Testimonies. See this text, so fatal to the Socinian scheme, triumphantly established against the *liberty* of their criticisms, in Dr. Magee's Postscript to Appendix, p 211, &c.

defence, expressly says, that it was "the Angel" who spake with Moses in the mount; and here the Apostle Paul declares, that it was the voice of *Christ* which then shook the earth. Nothing can more certainly prove than this collation of Scriptures, that the Son gave the law, and that "the Angel" who spake to Moses, and Christ, are the same person.

The above passage, in its necessary grammatical construction, so certainly marks out Christ as the person whose voice shook the earth at the giving of the law, that the Socinians, in their New Version of the Testament, have chosen to get rid of a testimony which no criticism could evade, by daringly and wilfully corrupting the text itself, and without any authority whatever, they read, instead of "See that ye refuse not *him* that speaketh," "See that ye refuse not *God* that speaketh;" thus introducing a new antecedent. This instance of a wilful perversion of the very *text* of the word of God, has received its merited reprobation from those eminent critics who have exposed the dishonesties, the ignorance, and the licentious criticisms, of what is called an "Improved Version" of the New Testament.

These views are confirmed by the testimonies of the early fathers, to whom the opinions of the apostles, on this subject, (one not at all affected by the controversies of the day,) would naturally descend. The opinions of the ancient Jews, which are also decidedly confirmatory, will be given in their proper place.

Justin Martyr has delivered his sentiments very freely upon the Divine appearances. "*Our Christ*," he says, "conversed with Moses out of the bush, in the appearance of fire. And Moses received great strength from Christ, who spake to him in the appearance of fire." Again:—"The Jews are justly reproved, for imagining that the Father of all things spake to Moses, when indeed it was the *Son of God*, who is called the *Angel* and the *Messenger* of the Father. He formerly appeared in the form of fire, and without a human shape, to Moses and the other prophets: but now—being made a man of the virgin," &c.

Irenæus says, "The Scripture is full of the Son of God's appearing: sometimes to talk and eat with Abraham, at other times to instruct Noah about the measures of the ark; at another time to seek Adam; at another time to bring down judgment upon Sodom; then again, to direct Jacob in the way; and again, to converse with Moses out of the bush."

Tertullian says, "It was *the Son* who judged men from the beginning, destroying that lofty tower, and confounding their languages, punishing the whole world with a flood of waters, and raining fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, *the Lord* pouring it down *from the Lord:* for he always descended to hold converse with men, from Adam even to the patriarchs and prophets, in visions, in dreams, in mirrors, in dark sentences, always preparing his way from the beginning: neither was it

possible, that the God who conversed with men upon earth, could be any other than *that Word* which was to be made flesh."

Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The Pedagogus appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, wrestled with him, and lastly, manifested himself to Moses." Again: "Christ gave the world the law of nature, and the written law of Moses. Wherefore, the Lord deriving from one fountain both the first and second precepts which he gave, neither overlooked those who were before the law, so as to leave them without law, nor suffered those who minded not the philosophy of the barbarians to do as they pleased. He gave to the one precepts, to the other philosophy, and concluded them in unbelief till his coming, when, whosoever believes not is without excuse."

Origen says, "My Lord Jesus Christ descended to the earth more than once. He came down to Esaias, to Moses, and to every one of the prophets." Again:—"That our blessed Saviour did sometimes become as an angel, we may be induced to believe, if we consider the appearances and speeches of angels, who in some texts have said, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac,'" &c.

Theophilus of Antioch also declares, "that it was the Son of God who appeared to Adam immediately after the fall, who, assuming the person of the Father and the Lord of all, came in paradise under the person of God, and conversed with Adam."

The synod of Antioch:—"*The Son*," say they, "is sometimes called an *Angel*, and sometimes the *Lord*; sometimes *God*. For it is impious to imagine, that the God of the universe is any where called an angel. But the Messenger of the Father is the Son, who himself is Lord and God: for it is written, *The Angel of the great council*."

Cyprian observes, that "the Angel who appeared to the patriarch is *Christ and God*." And this he confirms by producing a number of those passages from the Old Testament, where it is said, that an Angel of the Lord appeared and spake in the name of God.

Hilary speaks to the same purpose:—"He who is called the *Angel* of God, the same is *Lord* and God. For the Son of God, according to the prophet, is the *Angel of the great council*. That the distinction of persons might be entire, he is called the Angel of God; for he who is *God of God*, the same also is the *Angel* (or *Messenger*) of God; and yet, at the same time, that due honour might be paid, he is also called *Lord and God*."

St. Basil says, "Who then is it that is called both an angel and God? Is it not He, whose name, we are told, is called the *Angel of the great Covenant?* For though it was in aftertimes that he became the Angel of the great Covenant, yet even before that, he did not disdain the title of an *Angel*, or Messenger." Again:—"It is manifest to every one, that where the same person is styled both an Angel and God, it must be

meant of the *only begotten*, who manifests himself to mankind in different generations, and declares the will of the Father to his saints. Wherefore, he who, at his appearing to Moses, called himself I AM, cannot be conceived to be any other person than God, the *Word who was in the beginning with God.*"

Other authorities may be seen in Waterland's Defence of Queries, that decidedly refutes Dr. Samuel Clarke, who pretends, in order to cover his Arianism, that the fathers represent the angel as speaking in the *person* of the Father.

Two objections to this doctrine, taken from the Scriptures, are answered without difficulty. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." To those only who deny the manifestation and agency of the Father in every case in the Old Testament, this passage presents a difficulty. God the Father is certainly meant by the apostle, and he is said to have spoken by the prophets. But this is no difficulty to those who, though they contend that the ordinary appearances of the Deity were those of the Son, yet allow the occasional manifestation of the Father. He is the fountain of inspiration. The Son is sent by the Father, but the Spirit is sent by the Father and by the Son. This is the order in the New Testament, and also, as many passages show in the Old. The Spirit sent by the Father, qualified the prophets to speak unto "our fathers." The apostle, however, says nothing more than that there was an agency of the Father in sending the prophets, which does not exclude that of the Son also; for the opposition lies in the *outward visible* and *standing* means of conveying the knowledge of the will of God to men, which under the law was by mere men, though prophets; under the Gospel, by the incarnate Son. Communication by prophets under the law, did not exclude other communications by the Son in his Divine character; and communication by the Son under the Gospel, does not exclude other communications by apostles, evangelists, and Christian *prophets*. The text is not therefore an exclusive proposition either way. It is not clear, indeed, that any direct *opposition* at all is intended in the text, but a simple declaration of the *equal* authority of both dispensations, and the peculiar glory of the latter, whose *human* minister and revealer was the Son of God in our nature.

The second objection rests upon a passage in the same epistle. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by *the Lord?*" To understand this passage, it is to be noted, that the apostle refers to the *judicial* law of Moses, which had its prescribed penalty for every "transgression and disobedience." Now this law was

not, like the decalogue, spoken by God himself, but by angels. For after the voice of God had spoken the ten commandments, the people entreated that God would not speak to them any more. Accordingly, Moses says, Deut. v, 22, "These words," the decalogue, "the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, with a great voice, and he added no more, and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." The rest, "both the judicial and the ceremonial law, was delivered, and the covenant was made, by the mediation of Moses: and therefore the apostle says, Gal. iii, 19, 'The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator:' hence it is called the law of Moses. And the character given of it in the Pentateuch is this,—these are the statutes, and judgments, and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai, by the hand of Moses." (*Randolph Præl. Theolog.*)

Nor does the apostle's argument respect the *author* of the law, for no one can suppose that angels were its authors, nor the *giver* of the law, for angels have no such authority; but the *medium* through which it was communicated, or "spoken." In the case of the decalogue, that medium was the Lord, the Angel Jehovah himself in majesty; but in the body of judicial and ceremonial laws, to which he clearly refers, angels and Moses. The *visible medium* by which the Gospel was communicated, was the Son of God made flesh. That word was "spoken by the Lord," not only in his personal, but in his mediatorial character; and, by that wonderful condescension, its importance, and the danger of neglecting it, were marked in the most eminent and impressive manner.

It has now therefore been established that the Angel Jehovah, and Jesus Christ our Lord, are the same person; and this is the first great argument by which his Divinity is established. He not only existed before his incarnation, but is seen at the head of the religious institutions of his own Church, up to the earliest ages. We trace the manifestations of the same person from Adam to Abraham; from Abraham to Moses; from Moses to the prophets; from the prophets to Jesus. Under every manifestation he has appeared in the form of God, never thinking it robbery to be equal with God. "Dressed in the appropriate robes of God's state, wearing God's crown, and wielding God's sceptre," he has ever received Divine homage and honour. No name is given to he Angel Jehovah, which is not given to Jehovah Jesus; no attribute is ascribed to the one, which is not ascribed to the other; the worship which was paid to the one by patriarchs and prophets, was paid to the other by evangelists and apostles; and the Scriptures declare them to be the same august person,—the image of the Invisible, whom no man can see and live;—*the Redeeming Angel, the Redeeming Kinsman, and the Redeeming God.*

That the titles with which our Lord is invested are unequivocal declarations of absolute Divinity, will be the subject of the next chapter

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CHAPTER XII.

The Titles of Christ.

Various proofs were adduced, in the last chapter, that the visible Jehovah of the Old Testament is to be regarded as a Being distinct from the Father, yet having Divine titles ascribed to him, being arrayed with Divine attributes, and performing Divine works *equal* to his. That this august Being was the same who afterward appeared as "The Christ," in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, was also proved; and the conclusion of that branch of the argument was, that Jesus Christ is, in an absolute sense, a Divine person, and as such, is to be received and adored.

It is difficult to conceive any point more satisfactorily established in the Scriptures than the personal appearance of our Lord, during the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, under a Divine character; but this argument, so far from having exhausted the proof of his Godhead, is only another in that series of rising steps by which we are, at length, conducted to the most unequivocal and ample demonstration of this great and fundamental doctrine.

The next argument is stated at the head of this chapter. If the titles given to Christ are such as can designate a Divine Being, and a Divine Being only, then is he, to whom they are by inspired authority ascribed, Divine; or, otherwise, the Word of Truth must stand charged with practising a direct deception upon mankind, and that in a fundamental article of religion. This is our argument, and we proceed to the illustration.

The first of these titles which calls for our attention is that of Jehovah. Whether "the Angel Jehovah" were the future Christ or not, does not affect this case. Even Socinians acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah; and if this is one of the titles of the promised Messiah, it is, consequently a title of our Lord, and must be ascribed to him by all who believe Jesus to be the Messiah.

So many instances of this were given in the preceding chapter, that it is unnecessary to repeat them; and indeed the fact, that the name Jehovah is applied to the Messiah in many passages of the Old Testament, is admitted by the manner in which the argument, deduced from this fact, is objected to by our opponents. "The Jewish Cabbalists," says Dr. Priestley, "might easily admit that the Messiah might be called Jehovah, without supposing that he was any thing more than a

man, who had no existence before his birth." "Several things in the Scriptures are called by the name of Jehovah; as, Jerusalem is called Jehovah our Righteousness." (*History of Early Opinions.*) They are not, however, the Jewish interpreters only who give the name Jehovah to Messiah; but the inspired prophets themselves, in passages which, by the equally inspired evangelists and apostles, are applied to Jesus. No instance can be given in which any being, acknowledged by all to be a created being, is called Jehovah in the Scriptures, or was so called among the Jews. The peculiar sacredness attached to this name among them was a sufficient guard against such an application of it in their common language; and as for the Scriptures, they explicitly represent it as peculiar to Divinity itself. "*I am* JEHOVAH, *that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.*" "*I am* JEHOVAH, *and there is none else, there is no God beside me.*" "*Thou, whose* NAME ALONE *is* JEHOVAH, *art the most high, above all the earth.*" The *peculiarity* of the name is often strongly stated by Jewish commentators, which sufficiently refutes Dr. Priestley, who affirms that they could not, on that account, conclude the Messiah to be more than a man. *Kimschi* paraphrases Isaiah xliii, 8, "JEHOVAH, that is my name"—"*that name is proper to me.*" On Hosea xii, 5, "JEHOVAH his memorial," he says, "In the name El and Elohim, he communicates with others; but, in this name, he communicates with none." Aben Ezra, on Exodus iii, 14, proves, at length, that this name is proper to God. (*Hoornbeck, Socin. Confut.*)

It is, surely, a miserable pretence to allege, that this name is some times given to *places*. It is so; but only in composition with some other word, and not surely as indicative of any quality in the places themselves, but as MEMORIALS of the acts and goodness of JEHOVAH himself, as manifested in those localities. So "Jehovah-Jireh, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen," or, "the Lord will see or provide," referred to HIS interposition to save Isaac, and, probably, to the *provision* of the future sacrifice of Christ. The same observation may be made as to *Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Shallum*, &c: they are names, not descriptive of *places*, but of *events* connected with them, which marked the interposition and character of God himself. It is an unsettled point among critics whether *Jah*, which is sometimes found in composition as a proper name of a man, as *Abijah*, Jehovah is my father, *Adonijah*, Jehovah is my lord, be an abbreviation of Jehovah or not, so that the case will afford no ground of argument. But if it were, it would avail nothing, for it is found only in a combined form, and evidently relates not to the persons who bore these names, as a *descriptive appellation*, but to some connection which existed, or was supposed to exist, between them and the JEHOVAH they acknowledged as their God. The case would have been parallel, had our Lord been called *Abijah*, "Jehovah

is my father," or *Jedediah*, "the beloved of Jehovah." Nothing, in that case, would have been furnished, so far as mere *name* was concerned, to distinguish him from his countrymen bearing the same appellatives; but he is called *Jehovah* himself, a name which the Scriptures give to no person whatever, except to each of the sacred THREE, who stand forth, in the pages of the Old and New Testaments, crowned with this supreme and exclusive honour and eminence.

Nor is it true, that in Jeremiah xxxiii, 16, Jerusalem is called "Jehovah our Righteousness." The parallel passage in the same book, chap. xxiii, 5, 6, sufficiently shows that this is not the name of *Jerusalem*, but the name of "THE BRANCH." Much criticism has been bestowed upon these passages to establish the point, whether the clause ought to be rendered, "And this is the name by which the Lord shall call him, *our* Righteousness;" or "this is the name by which he shall be called, *the Lord our Righteousness;*" which last has, I think, been decisively established; but he would be a very exceptionable critic who should conclude either of them to be an appellative, not of Messiah, but of Jerusalem, contrary both to the scope of the passage and to the literal rendering of the words, words capable of somewhat different constructions, but in no case capable of being applied either to the people of Judah, or to the city of Jerusalem.

The force of the argument from the application of the name Jehovah to Messiah may be thus stated:—

Whatever belongs to Messiah, that may and must be attributed to Jesus, as being the true and only Christ; and accordingly we have seen, that the evangelists and apostles apply those passages to our Lord, in which the Messiah is unequivocally called *Jehovah*. But this is the peculiar and appropriate name of God; that name by which he is distinguished from all other beings, and which imports perfections so high and appropriate to the only living and true God, such as self existence and eternity, that it can, in truth, be a descriptive appellation of no other being. It is, however, *solemnly and repeatedly given to the Messiah*; and, unless we can suppose Scripture to contradict itself, by making that a peculiar name which is not peculiar to him, and to establish an inducement to that idolatry which it so sternly condemns, and an excuse for it, then this adorable name itself declares the absolute Divinity of him who is invested with it, and is to him, as well as to the Father, a *name of revelation*, a name descriptive of the attributes which can pertain only to essential Godhead.

This conclusion is corroborated by the constant use of the title "LORD" as an appellation of *Jesus*, the Messiah, when manifest in the flesh. His disciples not only applied to him those passages of the Old Testament, in which the Messias is called Jehovah, but salute and worship him by a title which is of precisely the same original import, and

which is, therefore, to be considered in many places of the Septuagint and the New Testament, an exact translation of the august name Jehovah, and fully equivalent to it in its import. (5) It is allowed, that it is also used as the translation of other names of God, which import simply dominion, and that it is applied also to merely human masters and rulers. It is not, therefore, like the Jehovah of the Old Testament, an *incommunicable* name, but, in *its highest sense*, it is universally allowed to belong to God; and if, in this *highest sense*, it is applied to Christ, then is the argument valid, that in the sacred writers, whether used to express the self and independent existence of him who bears it, or that dominion which, from its nature and circumstances, must be Divine, it contains a notation of true and absolute Divinity.

The first proof of this is, that, both in the Septuagint and by the writers of the New Testament, it is the term by which the name Jehovah is translated. The Socinians have a fiction that Κυριος properly answers to *Adonai*, because the Jews were wont, in reading, to substitute that name in place of *Jehovah*. But this is sufficiently answered by Bishop Pearson, who observes, that "it is not probable that the LXX should think Κυριος to be the proper interpretation of אדני, and yet give it to *Jehovah*, only in the place of *Adonai*; for if they had, it would have followed, that when *Adonai* and *Jehovah* had met in one sentence, they would not have put another word for *Adonai*, and placed Κυριος for *Jehovah*, to which, of itself, according to their observation, it did not belong." "The reason also of the assertion is most uncertain; for, though it be confessed that the Masoreths did read *Adonai*, when they found *Jehovah*, and Josephus before them expresses the sense of the Jews of his age, that the τετραγραμματον was not to be pronounced, and before him Philo speaks as much, yet it followeth not from thence that the Jews were so superstitious above three hundred years before, which must be proved before we can be assured that the LXX read *Adonai* for *Jehovah*, and for that reason translated it Κυριος." (*Discourses on Creed.*) The supposition is, however, wholly overturned by several passages, in which such an interchange of the names could not be made in the original, without manifestly depriving them of all meaning, and which absurdity could not, therefore, take place in a translation, and be thus made permanent. It is sufficient to instance Exodus vi, 2, 3, "I am the Lord, (Jehovah:) I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known unto them." This, it is true, is rather an obscure passage; but, whatever may be its interpretation, this is clear, that a sub

(5) Bishop Pearson, on the second article of the Creed, thus concludes a learned note on the etymology of Κυριος, Lord: "From all which it undeniably appeareth, that the ancient signification of Κυρω is the same with ειμι, or υπαρχω *esse, I am*"

stitution of *Adonai* for *Jehovah* would deprive it of all meaning whatever, and yet here the LXX translate Jehovah by Κυριος.

Κυριος, *Lord*, is, then, the word into which the Greek of the Septuagint renders the name *Jehovah;* and, in all passages in which Messias is called by that peculiar title of Divinity, we have the authority of this version to apply it, in its full and highest signification, to Jesus Christ, who is himself that Messias. For this reason, and also because, as הוה inspired, they were directed to fit and proper terms, the writers of the New Testament apply this appellation to their Master, when they quote these prophetic passages as fulfilled in him. They found it used in the Greek version of the Old Testament, in its *highest possible import*, as a rendering of Jehovah. Had they thought Jesus less than God, they ought to have avoided, and must have avoided, giving to him a title which would mislead their readers; or else have intimated, that they did not use it in its highest sense as a title of Divinity, but in its very lowest, as a term of merely human courtesy, or, at best, of human dominion. But we have no such intimation; and, if they wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of Truth, it follows, that they used it as being understood to be fully equivalent to the title *Jehovah* itself. This their quotations will show. The Evangelist Matthew (iii, 3) quotes and applies to Christ the celebrated prophecy of Isaiah xl, 3: "For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The other evangelists make the same application of it, representing John as the herald of Jesus, the "JEHOVAH" of the prophet, and their "Κυριος." It was, therefore, in the highest possible sense that they used the term, because they used it as fully equivalent to Jehovah. So again, in Luke i, 16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to THE LORD THEIR GOD, and he shall go before HIM in the spirit and power of Elias." "HIM," unquestionably refers to "the Lord their God;" and we have here a proof that Christ bears that eminent title of Divinity, so frequent in the Old Testament, "the LORD GOD," Jehovah Aleim; and also that Κυριος answered, in the view of an inspired writer, to the name Jehovah. On this point the Apostle Paul also adds his testimony, Romans x, 13, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved;" which is quoted from Joel ii, 32, "Whosoever shall call on the name of JEHOVAH shall be delivered." Other passages might be added, but the argument does not rest upon their number; these are so explicit, that they are amply sufficient to establish the important conclusion, that, in whatever senses the term "*Lord*" may be used, and though the writers of the New Testament, like ourselves, use it occasionally in a lower sense, yet they use it also in its highest possible sense, and in its loftiest signification when they

intended it to be understood as equivalent to Jehovah, and, in that sense they apply it to Christ.

But, even when the title "LORD" is not employed to render the name Jehovah, in passages quoted from the Old Testament, but is used as the common appellation of Christ, after his resurrection, the disciples so connect it with other terms, and with circumstances which so clearly imply Divinity, that it cannot reasonably be made a question but that they themselves considered it as a *Divine* title, and intended that it should be so understood by their readers. In that sense they applied it to the Father, and it is clear, that they did not use it in a lower sense when they gave it to the Son. It is put *absolutely*, and by way of *eminence*, "THE LORD." It is joined with "GOD;" so in the passage above quoted from St. Luke, where Christ is called the LORD GOD; and when Thomas, in an act of adoration, calls him "*My* LORD *and my* GOD." When it is used to express dominion, that dominion is represented as *absolute* and *universal*, and, therefore, *Divine*. "*He is* LORD *of all.*" "KING *of kings and* LORD *of lords.*" "Thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old, as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art *the same*, and thy years shall not fail."

Thus, then, the titles of "Jehovah" and "Lord" both prove the Divinity of our Saviour; "for," as it is remarked by Dr. Waterland, "if Jehovah signify the eternal, immutable God, it is manifest that the name is *incommunicable*, since there is but one God; and, if the name be *incommunicable*, then Jehovah can signify nothing but that one God, to whom, and to whom *only*, it is applied. And if both these parts be true, and if it be true, likewise, that this name is applied to Christ, the consequence is irresistible, that Christ is the same one God, not the same person, with the *Father*, to whom also the name Jehovah is attributed, but the same *substance*, the same *being*, in a word, the same *Jehovah*, thus revealed to be more persons than one."

GOD. That this title is attributed to Christ is too obvious to be wholly denied, though some of the passages which have been alleged as instances of this application of the term have been controverted. Even in this a great point is gained. Jesus Christ is *called* God: this the adversaries of his Divinity are obliged to confess, and this confession admits, that the *letter* of Scripture is, therefore, in favour of orthodox opinions. It is, indeed, said, that the term *God*, like the term LORD, is used in an inferior sense; but nothing is gained by this; nothing is, on that account, proved against the Deity of Christ; for it must still be allowed, that it is a term used in Scripture to express the Divine nature, and that it is so used generally. The question, therefore, is only

limited to this, whether our Lord is called *God*, in the highest sense of that appellation. This might, indeed, be argued from those passages in the Old Testament in which the title is given to the acting, manifested Jehovah, "the Lord God" of the Old Testament; but this having been anticipated, I confine myself chiefly to the evangelists and apostles.

Before that proof is adduced, which will most unequivocally show that Jesus Christ is called God, in the *highest sense* of that term, it will, however, be necessary to sh w that, in its highest sense, it involves the notion of absolute Divinity This has been denied: Sir Isaac Newton, who, on theological subjects, as Bishop Horsley observes, "went out like a common man," says that the word *God* "is a *relative* term, and has a regard to servants; it is true, it denotes a Being eternal, infinite, and absolutely perfect; but a Being, however eternal, infinite, and absolutely perfect, without dominion, would not be God." (*Philos. Nat. Mathæ. in calce.*) This relative notion of the term, as itself importing strictly nothing more than *dominion*, was adopted by Dr. S. Clarke, and made use of to support his semi-Arianism; and it seems to have been thought, that, by confining the term to express mere sovereignty, the force of all those passages of Scripture in which Christ is called God, and from which his absolute Divinity is argued, might be avoided. His words are, "The word Θεος, *God*, has, in Scripture and in all books of *morality* and *religion*, a relative signification, and not, as in *metaphysical* books, an *absolute* one: as is evident from the *relative* terms which, in *moral* writings, may always be joined with it. For instance: in the same manner as we say MY father, MY king, and the like; so it is proper also to say MY God, the God *of Israel*, the God *of the universe*, and the like. Which words are expressive of dominion and government. But, in the metaphysical way, it cannot be said MY Infinite Substance, the Infinite Substance *of Israel*, or the like."

To this Dr. Waterland's reply is an ample confutation. "I shall only observe here, by the way, that the word STAR is a *relative* word, for the same reason with that which the doctor gives for the other. For the *star of your god Remphan* (Acts vii, 43) is a proper expression; but, in the *metaphysical* way, it cannot be said, the luminous substance *of your god Remphan*. So again, *water* is a *relative* word; for it is proper to say the water *of Israel*; but, in the *metaphysical* way, it cannot be said, the fluid substance *of Israel*. The expression is improper. (6) By parity of reason, we may make *relative* words almost

(6) It is very obvious to perceive where the impropriety of such expressions lies. The word *substance*, according to the common use of language, when used in the singular number, is supposed to be *intrinsic* to the thing spoken of, whose substance it is; and, indeed, to be the thing itself. My substance is *myself*; and the substance of *Israel* is *Israel*. And hence it evinces to be improper to join *substance* with the relative *terms*, understanding it of any thing *intrinsic*.

as many as we please. But to proceed: I maintain that *dominion* is not the full import of the word God in Scripture; that it is but a part of the *idea*, and a small part too; and that if any person be called *God*, merely on account of *dominion*, he is called so by way of figure and resemblance only; and is not *properly* God, according to the Scripture notion of it. We may call any one a KING, who lives free and independent, subject to no man's will. He is a king *so far*, or in some respects; though, in many other respects, nothing like one; and, therefore, not *properly* a king. If, by the same figure of speech, by way of *allusion* and resemblance, any thing be called GOD, because resembling God in one or more particulars, we are not to conclude that it is *properly* and *truly* God.

"To enlarge something farther upon this head, and to illustrate the case by a few instances. Part of the *idea* which goes along with the word God is, that his habitation is sublime, and *his dwelling not with flesh*, Dan. ii, 11. This part of the *idea* is applicable to *angels* or to *saints*, and therefore they may thus far be reputed *gods;* and are sometimes so styled in Scripture or ecclesiastical writings. Another part of the complex idea of God is giving orders from above, and publishing commands from heaven. This was, in some sense, applicable to *Moses*, who is, therefore, called *a god unto Pharaoh;* not as being *properly* a god; but instead of God, in that instance, or that resembling circumstance. In the same respect, every *prophet* or *apostle*, or even a minister of a parish, might be *figuratively* called *God*. *Dominion* goes along with the idea of God, or is a proof of it; and, therefore, *kings*, *princes*, and *magistrates*, resembling God in that respect, may, by the like figure of speech, be styled *gods:* not *properly;* for then we might as properly say *God David*, *God Solomon*, or *God Jeroboam*, as *King David*, &c; but by way of allusion, and in regard to some imperfect resemblance which they bear to *God* in some particular respects; and that is all. It belongs to God to receive worship, and sacrifice, and homage. Now, because the heathen *idols* so far resembled God as to be made the objects of worship, &c, therefore they also, by the same figure of speech, are by the Scripture denominated *gods*, though, at the same time, they are declared, in a proper sense, to be *no gods*. The *belly* is called the *god* of the luxurious, Phil. iii, 19, because some are as much devoted to the service of their *bellies* as others are to the service of God, and because their lusts have got the *dominion* over them. This way of speaking is, in like manner, grounded on some imperfect resemblance, and is easily understood. The prince of the devils is supposed by most interpreters, to be called the *god of this world*, 2 Cor. iv, 4. If so, the reason may be, either because the men of *this world* are entirely devoted to his service; or that he has got the power and dominion over them.

"Thus we see how the word *God*, according to the popular way of speaking, has been applied to angels, or to men, or to things inanimate and insensible; because some part of the *idea* belonging to *God* has been conceived to belong to them also. To argue from hence that any of them is properly *God*, is making the whole of a part, and reasoning fallaciously, *a dicto secundum quid*, as the schools speak, *ad dictum simpliciter*. If we inquire carefully into the Scripture notion of the word, we shall find that neither *dominion* singly, nor all the other instances of resemblance, make up the *idea*; or are sufficient to denominate any thing *properly* God. When the *prince of Tyre* pretended to be God, Ezek. xxviii, 2, he thought of something more than mere *dominion* to make him so. He thought of strength invincible and power irresistible, and God was pleased to convince him of his folly and vanity, not by telling him how scanty his *dominion* was, or how low his *office*; but how weak, frail, and perishing his *nature* was; that he *was man only*, and *not God*, Ezek. xxviii, 2–9, and should surely find so by the event. When the *Lycaonians*, upon the sight of a miracle wrought by *St. Paul*, Acts xiv, 11, took *him* and *Barnabas* for *gods*, they did not think so much of *dominion* as of *power* and *ability*, beyond *human*; and when the apostles answered them, they did not tell them that their *dominion* was only *human*, or that their *office* was not *Divine*; but that they had not a *Divine nature*. They were weak, frail, and feeble men; of like infirmities with the rest of their species, and, therefore, no *gods*.

"If we trace the Scripture notion of what is *truly* and *properly* God, we shall find it made up of these several ideas: infinite wisdom, power invincible, all-sufficiency, and the like. These are the ground and foundation of *dominion*, which is but a secondary notion, a consequence of the former; and it must be dominion *supreme*, and none else, which will suit with the Scripture notion of *God*. It is not that of a *governor*, a *ruler*, a *protector*, a *lord*, or the like, but a *sovereign* Ruler, an *almighty* Protector, an *omniscient* and *omnipresent* Governor, an eternal, immutable, all-sufficient *Creator*, *Preserver*, and *Protector*. Whatever falls short of this is not *properly*, in the Scripture notion, *God*, but is only called so by way of figure, as has before been explained. Now, if you ask me why the relative terms may properly be applied to the word *God*, the reason is plain, because there is something *relative* in the *whole* idea of God, namely, the notion of *governor*, *protector*, &c. If you ask why they cannot so properly be applied to the word *God* in the *metaphysical sense*, beside the reason before given, there is another as plain, because *metaphysics*, taking in only one *part* of the idea, consider the *nature* abstracted from the *relation*, leaving the *relative* part out."

To these observations may be added the argument of Dr. Randolph. (*Vindication of Christ's Divinity.*) "If God be a relative term, which has reference to *subjects*, it follows that when there were no subjects

there was no God; and, consequently, either the creatures must have been some of them eternal, or there must have been a time when there was no God." The matter, however, is put beyond all doubt, by the express testimony that it is not dominion *only*, but excellence of nature and attributes exclusively Divine which enter into the notion of God. Thus, in Psalm xc, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even *from everlasting to ever lasting*, thou art GOD." Here the idea of eternity is attached to the term, and he is declared to be GOD "*from everlasting*," and, consequently, before any creature's existence, and so before he could have any "*subjects*," or exercise any "*dominion*."

The import of the title GOD, in its highest sense, being thus established to include all the excellencies and glories of the Divine nature, on which alone such a *dominion* as is ascribed to God could be maintained, if that title be found ascribed to Christ, at any period, in this its highest sense, it will prove, not, as the Arians would have it, his *dominion* only, but his Divinity; and it is no answer to this at all to say that men are sometimes called gods in the Scripture. In the New Testament the term God, in the singular, is never applied to any man; and it is even a debated matter, whether it is ever a *human* appellation, either in the singular or the plural, in the Old Testament, the passages quoted being probably elliptical, or capable of another explanation. (7) But this is not important: if, in its highest sense, it is found used of Christ, it matters not to how many persons it is applied in its lower, or as a merely figurative appellation.

Matthew i, 23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name EMMANUEL, which being interpreted is, GOD with us." This is a portion of Scripture which the Socinians, in their "Improved Version," have printed in italics, as of "doubtful authority," though, with the same breath, they allow that it is found "in *all* the manuscripts and versions which are now extant." The ground, therefore, on which they have rested their objection is confessedly narrow and doubtful, and frail as it

(7) Exodus vii, 1: "See I have made thee *a god* to Pharaoh." This seems to be explained by chapter iv, 16: "Thou shalt be to him *instead* of God." Psalm lxxxii, 1: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty: [Heb. of God:] he judgeth among the gods." This passage is rendered by Parkhurst, "The Aleim stand in the congregation of God; in the midst the Aleim will judge." And on verse 6, "I have said ye are gods," he supposes an ellipsis of *Caph*, "I have said ye are *as* gods." As this is spoken of judges, who were professedly God's vicegerents, this is a very natural ellipsis, and there appears nothing against it in the argument of our Lord, John x, 34. The term, as used in all these passages, does not so much appear to be used in a *lower sense*, as by figurative application and ellipsis.

is, it has been entirely taken from them, and the authority of this scripture fully established. (*Vide Nare's Remarks on the New Version.*) The reason of an attempt, at once so bold and futile, to expunge this passage, and the following part of St. Matthew's history which is connected with it, may be found in the explicitness of the testimony which it bears to our Lord's Divinity, and which no criticism could evade. The prophecy which is quoted by the evangelist has its difficulties; but they do not in the least affect the argument. Whether we can explain Isaiah or not, that is, whether we can show in what manner the prophecy had a primary accomplishment in the prophet's day or not, St. Matthew is sufficiently intelligible. He tells us, that the words spoken by the prophet were spoken of Christ; and that his miraculous conception took place, "that," *in order that*, "they might be fulfilled;" a mode of expression so strong, that even those who allow the prophets to be quoted sometimes by way of accommodation by the writers of the New Testament, except this instance, as having manifestly, from the terms used, the form of an argument, and not of a mere allusion. (8) Farther, says the sacred historian, "and they shall call his name *Emmanuel*;" that is, according to the idiom of Scripture, where any thing is said to be called what it in reality is, he shall be "*Emmanuel*," and the interpretation is added, "GOD *with us*."

It is indeed objected, that the Divinity of Christ can no more be argued from this title of Emmanuel than the divinity of ELI, whose name signifies *my God*, or of *Elihu*, which imports *my God himself;* but it is to be remarked, that by these names such individuals were commonly and constantly known among those with whom they lived. But Immanuel was not the personal name of our Lord, he was not so called by his friends and countrymen familiarly: the personal name which he received was Jesus, by Divine direction, and by this he was known to the world. It follows, therefore, that *Immanuel* was a *descriptive* title, a *name of revelation*, expressive of his Divine character. It is clear, also, that in this passage he is called God; and two circumstances, in addition to that just mentioned, prove that the term is used in its full and highest sense. In Isaiah, from which the passage is quoted by the evangelist, the land of Judea is called the land of this Immanuel more than seven centuries before he was born. "And he (the Assyrian) shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of *thy land, O* IMMANUEL," chap. viii, 8. Thus is Christ, according to the argument in a former chapter, represented as existing before his birth in Judea, and, as the God of the Jews, the proprietor of the land of Israel.

(8) "Formula citandi qua Evangelista utitur cap. i, 22, τουτο δε ολον γεγονεν, ινα πληρωθη το ρηθεν manifeste este argumentantis, non comparantis, quæ magnopere diversa est ab alia ejusdem Evangelistæ, et aliorum," &c. (*Dathe*, in Isa. vii, 4.)

This also gives the true explanation of St. John's words, "He came unto his *own*, [nation] and his *own* [people] received him not." The second circumstance which proves the term God, in the title Immanuel, to be used in its highest sense is, that the same person, in the following chapter of Isaiah, is called "God," with the epithet of "mighty,"—"Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD." Thus, as Bishop Pearson observes, "First he is '*Immanu*,' that is, *with us*, for he hath lwelt among us; and when he parted from the earth, he said to his disciples, 'I am *with you alway*, even to the end of the world.' Secondly, he is EL, and that name was given him, as the same prophet testified, 'his name shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellor*, the MIGHTY GOD.' He then who is both properly called EL, that is God, and is also really IMMANU, that is, *with us*, must infallibly be that 'IMMANUEL,' who is '*God with us*.' No inferior Deity, but invested with the full and complete attributes of absolute Divinity—'the Mighty God.'"

In Luke i, 16, 17, it is said of John Baptist, "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD, and he shall go before HIM in the spirit and power of Elias." This passage has been already adduced to prove that the title "LORD" is used of Christ in the import of JEHOVAH. But he is called THE LORD their GOD, and, as the term LORD is used in its *highest* sense, so must also the term GOD, which proves that this title is given to our Saviour in its fullest and most extended meaning—"to Jehovah their God," or "to their God Jehovah," for the meaning is the same.

John i, 1: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, and the Word was GOD." When we come to consider the title "THE WORD," Λογος, this passage will be examined more at large. Here it is adduced to prove that the Logos, by whom all understand Christ, is called GOD in the highest sense. 1. Because when it is used of the Father, in the preceding clause, it must be used in its full import. 2. Because immediately to call our Lord by the same name as the Father, without any hint of its being used in a lower sense, would have been to mislead the reader on a most important question, if St. John had not regarded him as equal to the Father. 3. Because the creation is ascribed to the "Word," who is called God. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thi g made that was made." By this the absolute Divinity of Christ is infallibly determined, unless we should run into the absurdity of supposing it possible for a creature tc create, and not only to create all other created things, but himself also. For, if Christ be not God, he is a creature; and if "not any thing that was made," was made "without him," then he made himself.

This decided passage, as may be supposed, has been subjected to much critical scrutiny by the enemies of the faith, and many attempts have been made to resist its force. It is objected, that the Father is called

ὁ θεος, and the "Word" simply θεος, without the article. To which Dr. Middleton replies: (*Doctrine of the Greek Article.*)

"Certain critics, as is well known, have inferred from the absence of the article in this place, that θεος is here used in a subordinate sense; it has, however, been so satisfactorily answered that in whatever acceptation θεος is to be taken, it properly rejects the article, being here the predicate of the proposition; and *Bengel* instances the LXX, 1 Kings xviii, 24, κυριος θεος, as similar to the present passage. It may be added, that if we had read ὁ θεος, the proposition would have assumed the convertible form, and the meaning would have been, that whatever may be affirmed or denied of God the Father, may also be affirmed or denied of the Logos, a position which would accord as little with the trinitarian as with the Socinian hypotheses. It is, therefore, unreasonable to infer, that the word θεος is here used in a *lower sense*; for the writer could not have written Ὁ θεος without manifest absurdity."

In many passages too, in which, without dispute, θεος is meant of the Supreme Being, the article is not used. Matthew xix, 26, "With men this is impossible, but with God (θεῳ) all things are possible." Luke xvi, 13, "Ye cannot serve (θεῳ) and mammon." John i, 18, "No man hath seen God (θεον) at any time." John ix, 33, "If this man were not of God (θεου) he could do nothing." John xvi, 30, "By this we believe that thou camest from God," (θεου.) Many other instances might be given, but these amply reply to the objection.

To evade the force of the argument drawn from the creation being ascribed to the Word, a circumstance which fixes his title "GOD" in its highest possible sense, it is alleged, that the word γινομαι never signifies to *create*, and the Socinian version, therefore, renders the text, "All things were *done* by him," and the translators inform us, in a note, this means, that "all things in the Christian dispensation were *done* by Christ, that is, by his authority." But what shall we say to this bold assertion, that γινομαι is *never* used with reference to creative acts in the New Testament, when the following passages may be adduced in refutation? Heb. iv, 3, "Although the works were FINISHED from the foundation of the world." Heb. xi, 3, "So that things which are seen were not MADE of things that do appear." James iii, 9, "Men which are *made* after the similitude of God." In all these passages, and in some places of the Septuagint also, that very word is used which, they tell us, never expresses, in Scripture, the notion of creation. Even the same chapter, verse 10, gives an instance of the same use of the word. "He was in the world, and the world was made (εγενετο) by him." For this, of course, they have a criticism; but the manner in which this passage, so directly in refutation of their assertion, is disposed of in their "Improved Version," is a striking confirmation of the entire impossibility of accommodating Scripture to their system. "The world was

made by him," says the evangelist. "The world was *enlightened* by him," say the Socinian translators, without the slightest authority, and in entire contradiction to the scope of the passage. Why did they not render the word as in the preceding verse, "The world was *done* by him?" which, in point of fact, makes no difference in the sense, when rightly considered. The *doing*, ascribed to the Eternal Word, is of a specific character,—doing in the sense of *framing*, *making*, or *creating* (παντα) "all things."

The Socinians have not, however, fully satisfied themselves with this notable criticism in their "Improved Version;" and some of them, therefore, render "all things were made *by* him," "all things were made *for* him." But these criticisms cannot stand together. If the verb γινομαι is to be deprived of the import of *creation*, then it is impossible to retain the rendering of "all things were made *for* him," since his own acts of ordering the Christian dispensation and "enlightening" the world could not be "*for* him," but must have been done "*by* him." If, on the contrary, they will have it that all things were done *for* him, then γινομαι must be allowed to import creation, or their production by the omnipotence of God. Both criticisms they cannot hold, and thus they confess that one destroys the other. Their rendering of δι' αυτου cannot, however, be supported; for δια, with a genitive, denotes not the *final*, but the *efficient* cause. (9) The introduction to St. John's Gospel may, therefore, be considered as an inexpugnable proof that Deity, in its highest, and in no secondary or subordinate sense is ascribed to our Saviour, under his title God—"and the Word was GOD." Nor in any other than the highest sense of the term *God* can the confession of Thomas, John xx, 28, be understood. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, my LORD and my GOD." The Socinian version, in its note on this passage, intimates that it may be considered not as a confession, but as an *exclamation*, "My Lord! and my God!" thereby choosing to put profane, or, at least, vulgar language into the mouth of this apostle, of which degradation we have certainly no example in the narration of the evangelists. *Michaelis* has justly observed, that if Thomas had spoken *German*, (he might have added English, French, or Italian,) it might have been contended with some plausibility, that "My Lord and my God" was only an irreverent ejaculation; but that Jewish astonishment was thus expressed is wholly without proof or support. Add to this, that the words are introduced with ειπεν αυτω, *said to him*, that is, to Christ; a mere ejaculation, such as that here supposed, is rather an appeal to Heaven. Our Saviour's reply makes it absolutely certain, that the words of Thomas, though they are in the form of an exclamation,

(9) So δια is used throughout St. John's Gospel; and in Heb. ii, 10, it is said of the Father. δι' ον τα παντα, "by whom are all things." So also Rom. xi, 36, "Of him, and through him, (δι' αυτου,) and to him are all things."

amount to a confession of faith, and were equivalent to a direct assertion of our Saviour's Divinity. Christ commends Thomas's acknowledgment, while he condemns the tardiness with which it is made; but so what did this acknowledgment amount? That Christ was LORD *and* GOD. (*Middleton.*)

In Titus ii, 13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," our Lord is not only called God, but the GREAT GOD, which marks the sense in which the term is used by the apostle, and gives unequivocal evidence of his opinions on the subject of Christ's Divinity. Socinian and Arian interpreters tell us, that "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" are two persons, and therefore refer the title "great God" to the Father. The Socinian version accordingly renders the text, "the glorious appearance of the great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ." To this interpretation there are satisfactory answers. Dr. Whitby observes:—

"Here it deserveth to be noted, that it is highly probable, that Jesus Christ is styled *the great God*, 1. Because, in the original, the article is prefixed only before *the great God*, and therefore, seems to require this construction, the appearance of Jesus Christ, the great God and our Saviour. 2. Because, as God the Father is not said properly to appear, so the word επιφανεια never occurs in the New Testament, but when it is applied to Jesus Christ and to some coming of his; the places in which it is to be found being only these, 2 Thess. ii, 8; 1 Tim. vi, 14; 2 Tim. i, 10, and iv, 1, 8. 3. Because Christ is emphatically styled '*our hope*,' '*the hope of glory*:' Col. i, 23; 1 Tim. i, 1. And *lastly*, because not only all the ancient commentators on the place do so interpret this text, but the anti-Nicene fathers also; Hyppolitus, speaking of the appearance of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ; and Clemens of Alexandria, proving Christ to be both God and man, our Creator, and the Author of all our good things, from these very words of St. Paul." (*Exposition.*)

Independent of the criticism which rests upon the absence of the article, it is sufficient to establish the claim of our Saviour to the title of "the great God" in this passage, that επιφανεια, "the appearing," is never, in the New Testament, spoken of the Father, but of the Son only; but, since the time of this critic, the doctrine of the Greek article has undergone ample and acute investigation, and has placed new guards around this and some other passages of similar construction against the perversions of heresy. It has, by these investigations, been established, that the Greek idiom forbids θεου and σωτηρος to be understood except of the same person; and Mr. Granville Sharp, therefore, translates the text, "expecting the blessed hope and appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ:" επιφανειαν της δοξης του μεγαλου θεου και σωτηρος ημων Ιησου χριστου.

"This interpretation depends upon the rule or canon brought forward into notice not many years ago by Mr. Granville Sharp. It excited a controversy, and Unitarians either treated it with ridicule, or denied its applicability to the New Testament. But after it had been shown by Mr. Wordsworth, that most of the texts to which the rule applies were understood in the way Mr. Sharp explained them by the ancient fathers, who must surely have known the idiom of their native tongue; and after the doctrine of the Greek article had been investigated with so much penetration and learning by Dr. Middleton, all who have paid attention to the subject have acquiesced in the canon." (*Holden's Testimonies.*)

This important canon of criticism is thus stated by Dr. Middleton:—

"When two or more attributes, joined by a copulative or copulatives, are *assumed* of the *same* person or thing, before the first attributive the article is *inserted*, before the remaining ones it is *omitted.*" The limitations of this rule may be seen in the learned author's work itself, with the reasons on which they rest. They are found in "names of substances, *considered as substances*, proper names, or names of abstract ideas;" and with such exceptions, and that of *plurals* occasionally, the rule uniformly holds. (1)

Another passage in which the appellation *God* is given to Christ, in a connection which necessarily obliges us to understand it in its highest sense, is Heb. i, 8: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever." The argument of the apostle here determines the sense in which he calls Jesus, the Son, "GOD," and the views he entertains of his nature. Angels and men are the only rational *created* beings in the universe which are mentioned by the sacred writers. The apostle argues that Christ is superior even to angels; that they are but *ministers*, he a sovereign, seated on a *throne;* that they *worship* him, and that he receives their *worship;* that they are *creatures*, but he *creator.* "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands;" and full of these ideas of supreme Divinity, he applies a passage to him out of the 45th Psalm, which is there addressed to the Messiah, "Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever."

The Socinian version renders the passage, "But to the Son he saith, God is thy throne for ever and ever," and in this it follows Wakefield and some others.

The first reason given to support this rendering is, that ὁ θεος is the nominative case. But the nominative, both in common and in Attic Greek, is often used for the vocative. It is so used frequently by the LXX.

(1) See Middleton on the Greek article; also, remarks at the close of the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to Titus, in Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary; Wordworth's Letters to Sharp: Dr. P. Smith's Person of Christ.

and by the writers of the New Testament. The vocative form, indeed, very rarely occurs in either, the nominative almost exclusively supplying its place; and in this passage it was so taken by the Greek fathers. (2) The criticism is, therefore, groundless.

The second is, that as the words are addressed to Solomon in the psalm from which they are quoted, they must be understood to declare, that God was the support of his throne. But the opinion that the psalm was composed concerning Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh' daughter, (3) has no foundation, either in Scripture or in antiquity, and is, indeed, contradicted by both. On this subject Bishop Horsley remarks:—

"The circumstances which are characteristic of the king, who is the hero of this poem, are every one of them utterly inapplicable to Solomon; insomuch, that not one of them can be ascribed to him, without contradicting the history of his reign. The hero of this poem is a warrior, who girds his sword upon his thigh; rides in pursuit of flying foes; makes havoc among them with his sharp arrows; and reigns, at last, by conquest, over his vanquished enemies. Now, Solomon was no warrior; he enjoyed a long reign of forty years of uninterrupted peace.

"Another circumstance of distinction in the great personage celebrated by this psalm is his love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness. The original expresses, that he had set his heart upon righteousness, and bore an antipathy to wickedness. His love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness had been so much the ruling principles of his whole conduct, that, for this, he was advanced to a condition of the highest bliss, and endless perpetuity was promised to his kingdom. The word we render 'righteousness,' in its strict and proper meaning, signifies 'justice,' or the constant and perpetual observance of the natural distinctions of right and wrong in civil society; and principally with respect to property in private persons, and, in a magistrate or sovereign, in the impartial exercise of judicial authority. But the word we render 'wickedness,' denotes not only 'injustice,' but whatever is contrary to moral purity in the indulgence of the appetites of the individual, and whatever is contrary to a principle of true piety toward God. Now, the word 'righteousness' being here opposed to this wickedness, must, certainly be taken as generally as the word to which it is opposed in a contrary signification. It must signify, therefore, not merely 'justice.' in the sense we have explained, but purity of private manners, and piety toward God. Now, Solomon was certainly, upon the whole, a good king, nor was he without piety; but his love of righteousness, in the

(2) "Omnes (Patres) uno consensu ὁ θεος hoc in loco vocative acceperunt, prout in Psalmis frequente a LXX usurpatur, et alioqui familiare est Græcis, Atticis præsertim, nominandi casum vocative sumere." (*Bishop Bull.*)

(3) This notion appears to have originated with Calvin.

large sense in which we have shown the word is to be taken, and his antipathy to the contrary, fell very far short of what the psalmist ascribes to his great king, and procured for him no such stability of his monarchy.

"Another circumstance wholly inapplicable to Solomon, is the numerous progeny of sons, the issue of the marriage, all of whom were to be made princes over all the earth. Solomon had but one son, that we read of, that ever came to be a king—his son and successor, Rehoboam, and so far was he from being a prince over all the earth, that he was no sooner seated on the throne than he lost the greater part of his father's kingdom.

"For, would it be said of him that his kingdom, which lasted only forty years, is *eternal?* It was not even eternal in his posterity. And, with respect to his *loving righteousness and hating wickedness*, it but ill applies to one who in his old age became an encourager of idolatry, through the influence of women. This psalm, therefore, is applicable only to the Christ. Farther, Solomon's marriage with Pharaohs daughter being expressly condemned as contrary to the law, 1 Kings xi, 2, to suppose that this psalm was composed in honour of that event, is, certainly, an ill-founded imagination. Estius informs us, that the rabbins, in their commentaries, affirm, that Psalm xlv was written wholly concerning the Messiah. Accordingly, they translate the title of the psalm as we do, *a Song of Loves;* the LXX, ωδη υπερ τω αγαπητων, a song concerning the beloved; Vulgate, *pro dilecto:* a title justly given to Messiah, whom God, by voices from heaven, declared *his beloved Son*. Beside, as the word *Meschil*, which signifies *for instruction*, (LXX, εις συνεσιν, Vulgate, *ad intellectum*,) is inserted in the title, and as no mention is made in the psalm of Solomon, from an account of whose *loves*, as Pierce observes, the Jewish Church was not likely to gain much *instruction*, we are led to understand the psalm, not of Solomon, but of Messiah only."

The interpretation "God is thy throne," is, moreover, monstrous, and derives no support from any parallel figurative, or elliptical mode of expression in the sacred writings—God, the throne of a creature! And, finally, as stated by Middleton, had that been the sense of the passage, the language requires that it should have been written, θρονος σου ὁ Θεος, not ὁ θρονος, (*Doctrine of the Greek Article*,) which, on the Socinian interpretation, is the predicate of the proposition. So futile are all these attempts to shake the evidence which this text gives to the absolute Godhead of our Saviour.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his SON JESUS CHRIST. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE," 1 John v, 20. Here our Saviour is called the *true God* and *eternal life*. The means by which this testimony is evaded, is to interpret the clause, "him that is true," of the Father, and to refer the

pronoun *this*, not to the nearest antecedent, "his Son Jesus Christ," but to the most remote, "him that is true." All, however, that is pretended by the Socinian critics on this passage is, not that this construction *must*, but that it *may* take place. Yet even this feeble opposition to the received rendering cannot be maintained: for, 1. To interpret the clause, "him that is true," of the Father, is entirely arbitrary; and the scope of the epistle, which was to prove that Jesus the Christ was the *true* Son of God, and, therefore, Divine, against those who denied his Divinity, and that "he had come in the flesh," in opposition to the heretics who denied his humanity, (4) obliges us to refer that phrase to the Son, and not to the Father. 2. If it could be established that the Father was intended by "him that is true," it would be contrary to grammatical usage to refer the pronoun *this*, is the "true God and eternal life," to the remote antecedent, without obvious and indisputable necessity.

"Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. ix, 5.

With respect to this text, it is to be noted,—

1. That it continues an enumeration of the particular privileges of the Jewish nation which are mentioned in the preceding verses, and the apostle adds, "whose are the fathers," the patriarchs, and prophets, and of whom "the Christ came."

2. That he throws in a clause of limitation with respect to the coming of Christ, "*according to the flesh*," which clearly states that it was only according to the *flesh*, the humanity of Christ, that he descended from the Jewish nation, and, at the same time, intimates, that he was more than *flesh*, or mere human nature.

3. The sentence does not end here: the apostle adds, "*who* is, over all, God blessed for ever;" a relative expression which evidently refers to the antecedent *Christ;* and thus we have an antithesis, which shows the reason why the apostle introduced the limiting clause, "according to the flesh;" and explains why Christ, *in one respect*, did descend from the Jews; and *in another*, that this could not be affirmed of him: he was "God over all," and, therefore, only "according to the flesh" could he be of human descent.

4. That this completes the apostle's purpose to magnify the privileges of his nation: after enumerating many others, he crowns the whole by

(4) These were the docetæ, who taught that our Lord was a man in appearance only, and suffered and died in appearance only. On the contrary, the Cerinthians, and others believed that the Son of God was united to the human nature at his baptism, departed from it before his passion, and was reunited to it after his resurrection. According to the former, Christ was *man* in *appearance* only; according to the latter, he was the Son of God at the time of his passion and death in appearance only. We see, then, the reason why St. John, who writes against these errors, so often calls Christ, "him that is *true*," true God and true man, not either in appearance only.

declaring, that "God over all," when he became incarnate for the sake of human salvation, took a body of the seed of Abraham.

Criticism has, of course, endeavoured, if possible, to weaken the argument drawn from this lofty and impregnable passage; but it is of such a kind as greatly to confirm the truth. For, in the first place, various readings of manuscripts cannot here be resorted to for rendering the sense dubious, and all the ancient versions support the present reading. It has, indeed, been alleged, on the authority of Grasinus, that though the word "God" is found in all our present copies, it was wanting in those of Cyprian, Hilary, and Chrysostom. But this has been abundantly proved to be an error, that word being found in the manuscripts and best editions of Cyprian and Hilary, and even St. Chrysostom affords decisive testimony to the common reading; in short, "the word God, in this text is found in *every known manuscript* of this epistle, *in every ancient version* extant, and in *every father* who has had occasion to quote the passage; so that, in truth, there can scarcely be instanced a text in the New Testament in which *all* the ancient authorities more satisfactorily agree." (*Magee on Atonement. See also Nares on the New Version.*) The only method of dealing with this passage left to Arians and Socinians was, therefore, to attempt to obtain a different sense from it by shifting the punctuation. By this device some read, "and of whom is the Christ, according to the flesh. God, who is over all, be blessed for ever." Others, "and of whom is the Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all. Blessed be God for ever." A critic of their own, Mr. Wakefield, whose authority they acknowledge to be very great, may, however, here be turned against them. Both these constructions, he acknowledges, appear so awkward, so abrupt, so incoherent, that he never could be brought to relish them in the least degree; (*Inquiry into Opinions, &c.;*) and Dr. S. Clarke who was well disposed to evade this decisive passage, acknowledges that the common reading is the most obvious. But independent of the authority of critics, there are several *direct* and *fatal* objections to this altered punctuation. It leaves the limiting clause, "according to the flesh," wholly unaccounted for; for no possible reason can be given for that limitation on the Socinian scheme. If the apostle had regarded Christ simply as a man, he could have come in no other way than "according to the flesh;" nor is this relieved at all by rendering the phrase, as in their "Improved Version," by "natural descent," for a mere man could only appear among men by "natural descent." Either, therefore, the clause is a totally unmeaning and an impertinent parenthesis, or it has respect to the natural antithesis which follows—his supreme Divinity, as "God over all." Thus the scope of the passage prohibits this license of punctuation. To the latter clause being considered as a doxology to God the Father, there is an insuperable critical difficulty. Dr. Middleton observes:—

"It has been deemed a safer expedient to attempt a *construction* different from the received one, by making the whole or part of the clause ὁ be merely a doxology in praise of the Father, so that the rendering will be either 'God, who is over all, be blessed for ever,' or, beginning at θεος, 'God be blessed for ever.' These interpretations also have their difficulties; for thus ευλογητος will properly want the article. On the first, however, of these constructions, it is to be observed, that in all the doxologies both of the LXX and of the New Testament, in which ευλογητος is used, it is placed at the beginning of the sentence: in the New Testament there are five instances, all conspiring to prove this usage, and in the LXX about forty. The same arrangement is observed in the *formula* of CURSING, in which επικαταρατος always precedes the mention of the person cursed. The reading then would, on this construction, rather have been, ευλογητος ὁ ων επι παντων θεος εις τας αιωνας. Against the other supposed doxology, the objection is still stronger, since that would require us not only to transpose ευλογητος, but to read Ὁ θεος. Accordingly, in all instances, where a doxology is meant, we find ευλογητος ὁ θεος." (*Doctrine of Greek Article.*)

Whitby also remarks:—

"The words will not admit of that interpunction and interpretation of Erasmus, which will do any service to the Arians or Socinians, namely, that a *colon* must be put after the words κατα σαρκα, *after the flesh;* and the words following must be an *ecphonema*, and grateful exclamation for the blessings conferred upon the Jews: thus, *God, who is over all, be blessed for ever.* For this exposition is so harsh, and without any like example in the whole New Testament, that as none of the orthodox ever thought upon it, so I find not that it ever came into the head of any Arian. Socinus himself rejects it for this very good reason, that θεος ευλογητος, *God be blessed*, is an unusual and unnatural construction; for, wherever else these words signify *blessed be God*, ευλογητος is put before God, as Luke i, 68; 2 Cor. i, 3; Eph. i, 3; 1 Peter i, 3; and θεος hath an article prefixed to it; nor are they ever immediately joined together otherwise. The phrase occurs twenty times in the Old Testament, but in every place ευλογητος goes before, and the article is annexed to the word *God*, which is a demonstration that this is a perversion of the sense of the apostle's words."

The critical discussion of this text is farther pursued by the writers just quoted; by Dr. Nares, in his Remarks; Mr. Wardlaw, in his Discourses; Archbishop Magee, and others; and we may confidently say of it, with Doddridge, that it is "a memorable text, and contains a proof of Christ's proper Deity, which the opposers of that doctrine have never been able, nor will ever be able to answer." So it was considered and quoted "by the fathers," says Whitby, "from the beginning; and," continues the same commentator, "if these words are spoken by the

Spirit of God concerning Christ, the arguments hence to prove him truly and properly God are invincible; for, first, ὁ θεος επι παντων, *God over all*, is the periphrasis by which all the heathen philosophers did usually represent the supreme God; and so is God the Father described both in the Old and New Testament, as ὁ επι παντων, he that *is over all*, Eph. iv, 6. Secondly, This is the constant epithet and periphrasis of the great God in the Old Testament, that he is ευλογητος εις τον αιωνα, *God blessed for evermore*, 1 Chron. xvi, 36; Psalm xli, 13, and lxxxix, 52; and also in the New, where he is styled the God ὁς εστιν ευλογητος εις τας αιωνας, *who is blessed for evermore.*"

Numerous other passages might be cited, where Christ is called "GOD:" these only have been selected, not merely because the proof does not rest upon the number of Scriptural testimonies, but upon their explicitness; but also because they all associate the term God, as applied to our Saviour, with other titles, or with circumstances, which demonstrate most fully, that that term was used by the inspired penmen in its highest sense of true and proper Deity when they applied it to Christ. Thus we have seen it associated with *Jehovah;* with *Lord*, the New Testament rendering of that ineffable name; with acts of creative energy, as in the introduction to the Gospel of St. John; with the supreme dominion and perpetual stability of the throne of the Son, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the Epistle to Titus, he is called "the GREAT God;" in 1 John, "the TRUE GOD," and the giver of "ETERNAL LIFE;" and in the last text examined, his twofold nature is distinguished—*man*, "according to the flesh," and in his higher nature, GOD, "God over all, blessed for evermore." These passages stand in full refutation of both the Arian and Socinian heresies. In opposition to the latter, they prove our Saviour to be more than man, for they assert him to be *God;* and in opposition to the latter, they prove that he is God, not in an inferior sense, but "*the great God*," "*the true God*," and "*God over all, blessed for evermore.*"

I pass over, for the sake of greater brevity, other titles more rarely ascribed to our Saviour, such as, the "LORD OF GLORY," 1 Cor. ii, 8; "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS," on which it would be easy to argue, that their import falls nothing short of absolute Divinity. A few remarks on three other titles of our Lord, of more frequent occurrence, may close this branch of the argument. These are, "KING OF ISRAEL;" "SON OF GOD;" and "THE WORD." The first bears evident allusion to the pre-existence of Christ, and to his sovereignty over Israel under the law. Now, it has been already established, that the *Jehovah*, "the *King of the Jews*," "the *Holy One of Israel our King*," "the *King, the Lord of Hosts*," of the Old Testament, is not the *Father;* but another *Divine* Person, who, in the New Testament, is affirmed to have been *Jesus Christ.* This being the view of the sacred writers of the evan-

gelical dispensation, it is clear that they could not use the appellation "THE KING OF ISRAEL" in a lower sense than that in which it stands in the Old Testament; and there, indisputably, even by the confession of opponents, it is collocated with titles, and attributes, and works which unequivocally mark a Divine character. It is with clear reference to this his peculiar *property* in the Jewish people that St. John says, "He came unto his *own*, and his *own* received him not; a declaration which is scarcely sense, if Judea was in no higher a meaning his own country (5) than it was the country of any other person who happened to be born there; for it is, surely, a strange method of expressing the simple fact that he was born a Jew, (were nothing more intended,) to say that he came into his own country, for this every person does at his birth, wherever he is born. Nor is it any aggravation of the guilt of the Jews, that they rejected merely a *countryman*, since that circumstance gave him no greater claim than that of any other Jew to be received as the Messiah. The force of the remark lies in this, that whereas the prophets had declared that "the King of Israel," "the Lord of hosts," "Jehovah," should become incarnate, and visit his own people; and that Jesus had given sufficient evidence that he was that predicted and expected personage; yet the Jews, "his own people" and inheritance, rejected him. The same notion is conveyed in our Lord's parable, when the Jews are made to say "this is the HEIR," he in whom the right is vested: "let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." (6)

It is sufficient, however, here to show, that the title "KING OF ISRAEL" was understood, by the Jews, to imply Divinity. Nathanael exclaims, "Rabbi, thou art the SON OF GOD, thou art the KING OF ISRAEL.' This was said upon such a proof of his Messiahship as, from his acquaintance with some matter private to Nathanael alone when he was "under the fig tree," was a full demonstration of *omniscience:* a circumstance which also determines the Divine import of "SON OF GOD,' the title which is here connected with it. Both were certainly understood by Nathanael to imply an assumption of Godhead.

"'As our Saviour hung upon the cross,' says St. Matthew, 'they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself; if thou be the SON OF GOD, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the KING OF ISRAEL, let

(5) "He came into his own country, and his countrymen received him not." (*Capp's Version.*)

(6) Venit ad sua, et sui non receperunt eum, id est, venit ad possessionem suam, et qui possessionis ipsius erant, eum non receperunt: quod explicatur, Matt. xxi, ubi filius dicitur missus ad ecclesiam Judaicam ως κληρονομον επι την κληρονομιαν αυτου. (*Ludov. de Dieu*, in loc.)

him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let *him* deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am THE SON OF GOD. The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast THE SAME in his teeth. [One of them saying, If thou be CHRIST, save thyself and us; but the other said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me, when thou comest *into thy kingdom.*] [And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, and saying If thou be THE KING OF THE JEWS, save thyself.] Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earth quake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, [Certainly this was *a righteous man,*] truly this was THE SON OF GOD.' Here we see the Jews, and the Gentiles residents among them, uniting to speak in a language that stamps Divinity upon the title used by them both. The Jewish passengers upon the road over the top of Calvary, stood still near the cross of our Saviour, insultingly to nod at him, to reproach him with his assumed appellative of the Son of God, and to challenge him to an exertion of that Divinity which both he and they affixed to it, by coming down from the cross, and saving himself from death. The elders, the scribes, and the chief priests, equally insulted him with the same assumption, and equally challenged him to the same exertion, calling upon him now to show he was truly THE KING OF ISRAEL, or the Lord and Sovereign of their nation in all ages, by putting forth the power of his Divine royalty, and coming down from the cross." (*Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.*)

Such is the testimony of the Jews to the sense in which our Saviour applied these titles to himself. The title "SON OF GOD" demands, however, a larger consideration, various attempts having been made to restrain its significance, in direct opposition to this testimony, to the mere humanity of our Saviour, and to rest its application upon his miraculous conception.

It is true, that this notion is held by some who hesitate not to acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is a Divine person; but, by denying his Deity as "THE SON OF GOD," they both depart from the faith of the Church of Christ in the earliest times, and give up to the Socinians the whole argument for the Divinity of Christ which is founded upon that eminent appellation. On this account, so frequent and indeed so general a title of our Lord deserves to be more particularly considered, that the foundation which it lays for the demonstration of the Divinity of Christ may not be unthinkingly relinquished; and that a door of error, which has been unconsciously opened by the vague reasonings of men, in other respects orthodox, may be closed by the authority of Holy Writ.

That the title, "SON OF GOD," was applied to Christ is a fact. His disciples, occasionally before and frequently after his resurrection, give him this appellation; he assumes it himself; and it was indignantly

denied to him by the Jews, who, by that very denial, acknowledge that it was claimed in its highest sense by him, and by his disciples for him. The question therefore is, what this title imported.

Those who think that it was assumed by Christ, and given to him by his disciples, because of his miraculous conception, are obviously in error. Our Lord, when he adopts the appellation, never urges his miraculous birth as a proof of his Sonship; on the contrary, this is a subject on which he preserves a total silence, and the Jews were left to consider him as "the son of Joseph;" and to argue from his being born at "Nazareth," as they supposed, that he could not be the Messiah: so ignorant were they of the circumstances of his birth, and, therefore, of the manner of his conception.

Again, our Lord calls God his Father, and grounds the proof of it upon his *miracles*. The Jews, too, clearly conceived, that, in making this profession of Sonship with reference to God, he assumed a Divine character, and made himself "equal with God." They therefore took up stones to stone him. In that important argument between our Lord and the Jews, in which his great object was to establish the point, that, in a peculiar sense, God was his Father, there is no reference at all to the miraculous conception. On the contrary, the title "Son of God," is assumed by Christ on a ground totally different; and it is disputed by the Jews, not by their questioning or denying the fact, that he was miraculously conceived, but on the assumed impossibility, that he, being a man, should be *equal to God*, which they affirmed that title to import.

Nor did the disciples themselves give him this title with reference to his conception by the Holy Ghost. Certain it is, that Nathanael did not know the circumstances of his birth; for he was announced to him by Philip as Jesus of *Nazareth*, "the *son* of *Joseph*;" and he asks, "Can any good thing come out of *Nazareth*?" He did not know, therefore, but that Jesus was the son of Joseph; he knew nothing of his being born at Bethlehem, and yet he confesses him to be "THE SON OF GOD, and the KING OF ISRAEL."

It may also be observed, that, in the celebrated confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the SON of the LIVING GOD," there is no reference at all to the miraculous conception; a fact at that time, probably, not known even to the apostles, and one of the things which Mary kept and pondered in her heart, till the Spirit was given, and the full revelation of Christ was made to the apostles. But, even if the miraculous conception were known to St. Peter, it is clear, from the answer of our Lord to him, that it formed no part of the ground on which he confessed "the SON of MAN" to be the "SON OF GOD;" for our Lord replies, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my FATHER which is in heaven." He had been specially taught this doctrine of the Sonship of Christ by God, an

unnecessary thing, certainly, if the miraculous conception had been the only ground of that Sonship; for the evidence of that fact might have been collected from Christ and the Virgin Mother, and there was no apparent necessity of a revelation from the Father so particular, a teaching so special, as that mentioned in our Lord's reply, and which is given as an instance of the peculiar "blessedness" of Simon Barjona.

This ground, therefore, not being tenable, it has been urged, that "SON OF GOD" was simply an appellation of Messiah, and was so used among the Jews; in other words, that it is an *official* designation, and not a *personal* one. Against this, however, the evangelic history affords decisive proof. That the Messiah was to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament, is plain from the texts adduced in a former chapter, and this, therefore, is to be considered the faith of the ancient Jewish Church. It is however certain, that, at the period of our Lord's advent, and for many years previously, the learned among the Jews had mingled much of the philosophy which they had learned from the heathen schools with their theological speculation; and that their writings present often a singular compound of crude metaphysical notions, allegories, cabalistic mysteries, and, occasionally, great and sublime truths. The age of our Lord was an age of great religious corruption and error. The Sadducees were materialists and skeptics; and the Pharisees had long cultivated the opinion, that the Messiah was to be a temporal monarch, a notion which served to vitiate their conceptions of his character and office, and to darken all the prophecies. Two things, however, amidst all this confusion of opinions, and this prevalence of great errors, appear exceedingly clear from the evangelists:—1. That the Jews recognized the existence of such a being as the "Son of God;" and that, for any person to profess to be the Son of God, in this peculiar sense, was to commit blasphemy. 2. That for a person to profess to be the Messiah simply was not considered blasphemy, and did not exasperate the Jews to take up stones to stone the offender. Our Lord certainly professed to be the Messiah; many of the Jews also, at different times, believed on him *as such;* and yet, as appears from St. John's Gospel, these same Jews, who "believed" on him as Messiah, were not only "offended," but took up stones to stone him as a blasphemer when he declared himself to be the "Son of God," and that God was his "proper Father." It follows from these facts, that the Jews of our Lord's times, generally, having been perverted from the faith of their ancestors, did not expect the second person of the trinity, "the Son of God," the Divine Memra, or Logos, to be the Messiah. Others, indeed, had a dim and uninfluential apprehension of this truth; there were who indulged various other speculations on the subject, but the true doctrine was only retained among the faithful few, as Simeon, who explicitly ascribes Divinity to the Messiah, whom he held in his arms; Nathanael, who connects

"SON OF GOD and KING OF ISRAEL" together, one the designation of the Divine *nature*, the other of the *office* of Messiah; and the apostles of our Lord, whose minds were gradually opened to this mystery of faith, and brought off from the vulgar notion of the *civil* character and mere human nature and human work of Messiah, by the inspiration and teaching of God—"flesh and blood did not reveal it to them, but the *Father*."

We cannot, therefore, account for the use of the title "SON OF GOD," among the Jews of our Lord's time, whether by his disciples or his enemies, by considering it as synonymous with "Messiah." The Jews regarded the former as *necessarily* involving a claim to Divinity, but not the latter; and the disciples did not conceive that they fully confessed their Master, by calling him the Messiah, without adding to it his higher *personal* designation. "Thou art the CHRIST," says St. Peter; but he adds, "THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD:" just as Nathanael, under the influence of a recent proof of his omniscience, and, consequently, of his Divinity, salutes him, first, as "SON OF GOD," and, then, as Messiah, "KING OF ISRAEL."

We are to seek for the origin of the title, "THE SON OF GOD," in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, where a DIVINE SON is spoken of, in passages, some of which have reference to him as Messiah *also*, and in others which have no such reference. In both, however, we shall find that it was a *personal* designation; *a name of revelation*, not of *office:* that it was *essential* in him to be a SON, and *accidental* only that he was the MESSIAH; that he was the first by *nature*, the second by *appointment;* and that, in constant association with the name of "SON," as given to him alone, and in a sense which shuts out all creatures, however exalted, are found ideas and circumstances of full and absolute Divinity.

Under the designation "SON," Son of God, he is introduced in the second Psalm: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." From apostolic authority we know, that the "SON," here introduced as speaking, is Christ; this application to him being explicitly made at least twice in the New Testament. Now, if we should allow, with some, that "*the day*" here spoken of is the day of Christ's resurrection, and should interpret his being "begotten" of the Father of the act itself of raising him from the dead, it is clear. that the miraculous conception of Christ is not, in this passage, laid down as the ground of his Sonship. The reference is clearly made to another transaction, namely, his resurrection. So far this passage, thus interpreted, furnishes an instance in which the Messiah is called "THE SON OF GOD," on some ground entirely independent of the mode of his incarnation. But he is so frequently called the Son, where there is no reference even to his resurrection, that this cannot be considered as the ground of that relation; and, indeed, the point is sufficiently

settled by St. Paul, who, in his Epistle to the Romans, tells us, that the resurrection of Christ was the *declaration* of his Sonship, not the ground of it—"DECLARED to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead." We perceive, too, from the Psalm, that the mind of the inspired writer is filled with ideas of his Divinity, of his claims, and of his works as God. This SON the nations of the earth are called to "kiss, lest he be angry, and they perish from the way;' and every one is pronounced *blessed* who "putteth his trust in him;" a declaration of unequivocal Divinity, because found in a book which pronounces every man cursed "who trusteth in *man*, and maketh *flesh* his arm."

"It is obvious, at first view, that the high titles and honours ascribed in this Psalm to the extraordinary person who is the chief subject of it, far transcend any thing that is ascribed in Scripture to any mere creature: but if the Psalm be inquired into more narrowly, and compared with parallel prophecies; if it be duly considered, that not only is the extraordinary person here spoken of called *the Son of God*, but that title is so ascribed to him as to imply, that it belongs to him in a manner that is absolutely singular, and peculiar to himself, seeing he is said to be begotten of God, (verse 12,) and is called by way of eminence, *the Son;* (verse 12;) that the danger of provoking him to anger is spoken of in so very different a manner from what the Scripture uses in speaking of the anger of any mere creature; 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little;' that when the kings and judges of the earth are commanded to serve God with fear, they are, at the same time, commanded to kiss the Son, which, in those times and places, was frequently an expression of adoration; and particularly that whereas other scriptures contain awful and just threatenings against those who trust in any mere man, the psalmist expressly calls them blessed who trust in the Son here spoken of: all these things, taken together and compared with the other prophecies, make up a character of Divinity; as, on the other hand, when it is said that God would set this his Son as his king on his holy hill of Zion, (verse 6,) these and various other expressions in this Psalm contain characters of the subordination which was to be appropriated to that Divine person who was to be incarnate." (*Maclaurin's Essay on the Prophecies.*)

Neither the miraculous conception of Christ, nor yet his resurrection from the dead, is, therefore, the foundation of his being called the Son of God in this Psalm. Not the first, for there is no allusion to it; not the second, for he was declared from heaven to be the "beloved Son" of the Father at his very entrance upon his ministry, and, consequently, before the resurrection; and also, because the very apostle who applies the prediction to the resurrection of Christ, explicitly states, that even that was a *declaration* of an antecedent Sonship. It is also to be noted, that, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul insti

tutes an argument upon this very passage in the second Psalm, to prove the superiority of Christ to the angels. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" "The force of this argument lies in the expression 'begotten,' importing that the person addressed is the Son of God, not by creation, but by generation. Christ's pre-eminence over the angels is here stated to consist in this, that whereas they were *created*, he is *begotten*; and the apostle's reasoning is fallacious, unless this expression intimates a proper and peculiar filiation." (7) "He hath obtained," says Bishop Hall, "a more excellent name than the angels, namely, *to be called* and *to be* the Son of God, not by grace and adoption; but by nature and communication of essence." This argument from Christ's superiority to all creatures, even the most exalted, shows the sentiment of St. Paul as to Divinity being implied in the title Son, given to the Messiah in the second Psalm. In this several of the ancient Jewish commentators agree with him; and here we see one of the sources from which the Jews derived their notion of the existence of a Divine Son of God.

Though the above argument stands independent of the interpretations which have been given to the clause "THIS DAY have I begotten thee," the following passage from Witsius, in some parts of its argument, has great weight:—

"But we cannot so easily concede to our adversaries, that, by the *generation* of Christ, mentioned in the second Psalm, his resurrection from the dead is intended, and that by *this day*, we are to understand the day on which God, having raised him from the dead, appointed him the King of his Church. For, 1. To beget signifies nowhere in the sacred volume to rescue from death; and we are not at liberty to coin new significations of words. 2. Though, possibly, it were used in that metaphorical acceptation, (which, however, is not yet proved,) it cannot be understood in this passage in any other than its proper sense. It is here adduced as a reason for which Christ is called the Son of God.—Now Christ is the Son of God, not figuratively, but properly; for the Father is called his *proper Father*, and he himself is denominated the *proper Son* of the Father, by which designation he is distinguished from those who are his sons in a metaphorical sense. 3. These words are spoken to Christ with a certain emphasis, with which they would not have been addressed to any of the angels, much less to any of mankind; but if they meant nothing more than the raising of him from the dead, they would attribute nothing to Christ which he doth not possess in common with many others, who, in like manner, are raised up by the power of God, to glory and an everlasting kingdom. 4. Christ raised

(7) Holden's Testimonies. "Non dicit Deus *adoptavi*, sed *generavi* te: quod communicationem ejusdem essentiæ et naturæ divinæ significat, modo tamen prorsu ineffabile." (*Michaelis.*)

himself from the dead, too, by his own power; from which it would follow, according to this interpretation, that he begat himself, and that he is his own son. 5. It is not true, in fine, that Christ was not begotten of the Father, nor called his Son, till that very day on which he was raised from the dead; for, as is abundantly manifest from the Gospel history, he often, when yet alive, professed himself the Son of God, and was often acknowledged as such. 6. *To-day* refers to time, when human concerns are in question; but this expression, when applied to Divine things, must be understood in a sense suitable to the majesty of the Godhead. And, if any word may be transferred from time, to denote eternity, which is the complete and perfect possession, at once, of an interminable life, what can be better adapted to express its unsuccessive duration than the term *to-day?* Nor can our adversaries derive any support to their cause from the words of Paul, Acts xiii, 32, 33, 'And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that *he hath raised up Jesus*, as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' For, 1. Paul doth not here prove the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, from this expression in the second Psalm (which, though it describes him who is raised again, doth not prove his resurrection,) but from Isaiah iv, 3, and Psalm xvi, 10; while he adds, (verses 34 and 35,) 'And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead,' &c. 2. The words 'raised up Jesus,' do not even relate to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but to the exhibition of him as a Saviour. This raising of him up is expressly distinguished from the raising of him again from the dead, which is subsequently spoken of, verse 34. The meaning is, that God fulfilled the promise made to the fathers, when he exhibited Christ to mankind in the flesh. But what was that promise? This appears from the second Psalm, where God promises to the Church, that, in due time, he would anoint, as King over her, his own Son, begotten of himself TO-DAY; that is, from eternity to eternity, for with God there is a perpetual to-day. *Grotius*, whose name is not offensive to our opposers, has remarked, that Luke makes use of the same word to signify *exhibiting*, in Acts ii, 30; iii, 26. To these we add another instance from chap. vii, 37: 'A prophet shall the Lord your God *raise up* unto you.' 3. Were we to admit, that the words of the Psalm are applied to the resurrection of Christ, which seemed proper to *Calvin*, *Cameron*, and several other Protestant divines, the sense will only be this, that, by his being thus raised up again, it was declared and demonstrated, that Christ is the Son of the Father, begotten of him from everlasting. The Jewish council condemned him for blasphemy, because he had called himself the Son of God. But, by raising him again from the grave, after he had been put to death as a

blasphemer, God acquitted him from that charge, and publicly recog nized him as his only-begotten Son. Thus he was *declared, exhibited, and distinguished as the Son of God with power*, expressly and particularly, to the entire exclusion of all others. The origina' word here employed by the apostles is remarkably expressive; and, as *Ludovicus de Dieu* has learnedly observed, it signifies that Christ was placed between such bounds, and so separated and discriminated from others that he neither should nor can be judged to be any one else than the Son of God. The expression 'with power,' may be joined with 'declared;' and then the meaning will be that he was shown to be the Son of God by a powerful argument. Or it may be connected with the 'Son of God;' and then it will intimate that he is the Son of God in the most ample and exalted sense of which the term is susceptible; so that this name, when ascribed to him, is 'a more excellent name' than any that is given to the noblest of creatures." (*Witsius's Dissertations on the Creed.*)

Solomon, in Proverbs viii, 22, introduces not the personified, but the *personal* wisdom of God, under the same relation of a *Son*, and in that relation ascribes to him Divine attributes. This was another source of the notion which obtained among the ancient Jews, that there was a Divine Son of God.

> "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way,
> Before his works of old.
> I was anointed from everlasting,
> From the beginning, before the world was,
> When there were no depths, I was BORN," &c. (6)

Here, "from considering the excellence of wisdom, the transition is easy to the undefiled source of it. Abstract wisdom now disappears, and the inspired writer proceeds to the delineation of a Divine Being, who is portrayed in colours of such splendour and majesty, as can be attributed to no other than the eternal Son of God." (*Holden's Translation of Proverbs.*) "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way." "The Father possessed the Son, had, or. as it were, acquired him by an eternal generation. To say of the attribute wisdom, that God possessed it in the beginning of his work of creation, is trifling; certainly it is too futile an observation to fall from any sensible writer; how, then, can it be attributed to the wise monarch of Israel?" (*Holden's Translation of Proverbs.*) "I was anointed from everlasting."— "Can it, with propriety, be said of an attribute, that it was anointed, invested with power and authority from everlasting? In what way, literal or figurative, can the expression be predicated of a quality? But t is strictly applicable to the Divine Logos, who was anointed by the

(6) Holden's Translation of Proverbs. In the notes to chapter viii, the application of this description of wisdom to Christ is ably and learnedly defended.

effusion of the Spirit; who was invested with power and dignity from everlasting; and who, from all eternity, derived his existence and essence from the Father; for in him 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.'" (*Holden's Translation of Proverbs.*)

It is a confirmation of the application of Solomon's description of wisdom to the second person of the Trinity, that the ancient Jewish writers, (Philo among the number,) as Allix has shown, (*Judgment of the Jewish Church,*) speak of the generation of Wisdom, and by that term mean "*the Word,*" a personal appellation so familiar to them. Nor is there any thing out of the common course of the thinking of the ancient Hebrews in these passages of Solomon, when applied to the *personal* wisdom; since he, as we have seen, must, like them, have been well enough acquainted with a distinction of persons in the Trinity, and knew Jehovah, their Lawgiver and King, under the title of "the Word of the Lord," as the Maker of all things, and the Revealer of his will, in a word, as Divine, and yet distinct from the Father. The relation in the Godhead of Father and Son was not, therefore, to the Jews an unrevealed mystery, and sufficiently accounts for the ideas of Divinity which they, in the days of Christ, connected with the appellation Son of GOD.

This relation is most unequivocally expressed in the prophecy of Micah, chap. v, 2, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting;" or, as it is in the margin, "from the days of eternity." (9) Here the person spoken of is said to have had a twofold birth, or "going forth." (1) By a natural birth he came forth from Bethlehem to Judah; by another and a higher, he was from the days of eternity. One is opposed to the other; but the last is carried into eternity itself by words which most clearly intimate an existence prior to the birth in Bethlehem, and that an eternal one: while the term used and translated his "goings forth," conveys precisely the same idea as the eternal generation of the Son of God. "The passage carefully

(9) So the LXX, and the Vulgate, and the critics generally. "Antiquissima erit origine, ab æternis temporibus." (*Dathe.*) "Imo a diebus æternitatis, *i.* e priusquam natus fuerit, jam ab æterno extitit." (*Rosenmuller.*)

(1) The word יָצָא to come forth, is used in reference to birth frequently, as Gen. xvii, 6; 2 Kings xx, 18; and so the Pharisees understood it, when referring to this passage, in answer to Herod's inquiry, where Christ should be "*born.*"—The plural form, his "goings forth" from eternity, denotes *eminency.* To signify the perfection and excellency of that generation, the word for birth is expressed plurally; for it is a common Hebraism to denote the *eminency* or *continuation* of a thing or action by the plural number. God shall judge the world "*in righteousness and equity;*" or most righteously and equitably Psalm xcviii, 9.—'The *angers* of the Lord," Lam. iv, 16, &c.

distinguishes his human nature from his eternal generation 'The prophet describes him who was to 'come out of Bethlehem' by another more eminent coming or going forth, even from all eternity. This is so signal a description of the Divine generation, before all time, or of that going forth from everlasting of Christ, the eternal Son of God; 'God, of the substance of the Father, begotten, before the worlds;' who was afterward in time made man, and born into the world in Bethlehem, that the prophecy evidently belongs to him, and could never be verified of any other." (*Dr. Pocock.*)

This text, indeed, so decidedly indicates that peculiar notion of the Divinity of our Lord, which is marked by the term and the relation of SON, that it is not surprising that Socinians should resort to the utmost violence of criticism to escape its powerful evidence. Dr. Priestley, therefore, says, "that it may be understood concerning the promises of God, in which the coming of Christ was signified to mankind from the beginning of the world." But nothing can be more forced or unsupported. The word here employed never signifies the work of God in predicting future events: but is often used to express natural birth and origin. So it is unquestionably used in the preceding clause, and cannot be supposed to be taken in a different sense, much less in a unique sense, in that which follows, and especially when a clear antithesis is marked and intended. He was to be born in time; but was not, on that account, merely a man: he was "from the days of eternity." By his natural birth, or "going forth," he was from Bethlehem; but his "goings forth," his production, his heavenly birth or generation, was from *everlasting*; for so the Hebrew word means, though, like our own word "ever," it is sometimes accommodated to temporal duration. Its proper sense is that of eternity, and it is used in passages which speak of the infinite duration of God himself.

Others refer "his goings forth from everlasting," to the purpose of God that he should come into the world; but this is too absurd to need refutation: no such strange form of speech as this would be, if taken in this sense, occurs in the Scriptures: and it would be mere trifling so solemnly to affirm that of Messiah, which is just as true of any other person born into the world. This passage must, then, stand as an irrefutable proof of the faith of the ancient Jewish Church, both in the Divinity and the Divine Sonship of Messiah; and, as Dr. Hales well observes, (*Hales's Analysis,*) "This prophecy of Micah is, perhaps, the most important single prophecy in the Old Testament, and the most comprehensive respecting the personal character of the Messiah, and his successive manifestation to the world. It crowns the whole chain of prophecies descriptive of the several limitations of the blessed Seed of the woman, to the line of Shem, to the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the tribe of Judah, and to the royal house of David. here

terminating in his birth at Bethlehem, 'the city of David.' It carefully distinguishes his human nativity from his eternal generation; foretells the rejection of the Israelites and Jews for a season, their final restoration, and the universal peace destined to prevail throughout the earth in 'the regeneration.' It forms, therefore, the basis of the New Testament, which begins with his human birth at Bethlehem, the miraculous circumstances of which are recorded in the introductions of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels; his eternal generation, as the ORACLE, or WISDOM, in the sublime introduction of John's Gospel; his prophetic character and second coming illustrated in the four Gospels and the Epistles; ending with a prediction of the speedy approach of the latter, in the Apocalypse, Rev. xxii, 20."

The same relation of SON, in the full view of supreme Divinity, and where no reference appears to be had to the office and future work of Messiah, is found in Proverbs xxx, 4, 'Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his SON'S name, if thou canst tell?" Here the Deity is contemplated, not in his redeeming acts, in any respect or degree; not as providing for the recovery of a lost race, or that of the Jewish people, by the gift of his Son: he is placed before the reverend gaze of the prophet in his acts of creative and conserving power only, managing at will and ruling the operations of nature; and yet, even in these peculiar offices of Divinity alone, he is spoken of as having a SON, whose "*name*," that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, whose *nature*, is as *deep*, *mysterious*, and *unutterable* as *his own*. "What is HIS name, and what is his SON'S name, canst thou tell?" (2)

The Scriptures of the Old Testament themselves in this manner furnished the Jews with the idea of a personal Son in the Divine nature; and their familiarity with it is abundantly evident, from the frequent application of the terms "Son," "Son of God," "first and only-begotten Son," "Offspring of God," to the Logos, by PHILO; and that in pas-

(2) Dr. A. Clarke, in his note on this text, evidently feels the difficulty of disposing of it on the theory that the term Son is not a Divine title, and enters a sort of caveat against resorting to doubtful texts, as proofs of our Lord's Divinity. But for all purposes for which this text has ever been adduced, it is not a doubtful one; for it expresses, as clearly as possible, that God has a SON, and makes no reference to the incarnation at all; so that the words are not spoken in anticipation of that event. Those who deny the Divine Sonship can never, therefore, explain that text. What follows in the note referred to is more objectionable: it hints at the *obscurity* of the writer as weakening his authority. Who he was, or what he was, we indeed know not; but his words stand in the book of Proverbs; a book, the inspiration of which both our Lord and his apostles have verified, and that is enough: we need no other attestation.

sages where he must, in all fair interpretation, be understood as speaking of a *personal*, and not of a personified Logos. The same terms are also found in other Jewish writers before the Christian era

The phrase "Son of God" was, therefore, known to the ancient Jews, and to them conveyed a very definite idea; and it is no answer to this to say, that it was a common appellative of *Messiah* among their ancient writers. The question is, how came "Son of God" to be an appellative of *Messiah?* "MESSIAH" is an *official* title; "SON," a *personal* one. It is granted that the Messiah is the Son of God; but it is denied that, therefore, the term Son of God ceases to be a personal description, and that it imports the same with Messiah. David was the "son of Jesse," and the "king of Israel;" he, therefore, who was king of Israel was the son of Jesse; but the latter is the *personal*, the former only the *official* description; and it cannot be argued that "son of Jesse" conveys no idea distinct from "king of Israel." On the contrary, it marks his origin and his family; for, before he was king of Israel, he was the son of Jesse. In like manner, "Son of God" marks the *natural* relation of Messiah to God; and the term *Messiah* his *official* relation to men. The personal title cannot otherwise be explained; and as we have seen, that it was used by the Jews as one of the titles of Messiah, yet still used *personally*, and not *officially*, and, also, without any reference to the miraculous conception at all, as before proved, it follows, that it expresses a *natural* relation to God, subsisting not in the human, but in the *higher nature* of Messiah; and, this higher nature being proved to be Divine, it follows, that the term Son of God, as applied to Jesus, is, therefore, a title of absolute Divinity, importing his participation in the very nature and essence of God. The same ideas of DIVINE Sonship are suggested by almost every passage in which the phrase occurs in the New Testament.

"When Jesus was baptized, he went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, This is my BELOVED SON, in whom I am well pleased." The circumstances of this testimony are of the most solemn and impressive kind, and there can be no rational doubt but they were designed authoritatively to invest our Lord with the title "Son of God" in the full sense which it bears in those prophecies in which the Messias had been introduced under that appellation, rendered still more strong and emphatic by adding the epithet "beloved," and the declaration, that in him the "Father was well pleased." That the name "Son of God" is not here given to Christ with reference to his resurrection, need not be stated; that it was not given to him, along with a declaration of the Father's pleasure in him, because of the manner in which he had fulfilled the office of Messiah, is also obvious, for he was but just then

entering upon his office and commencing his ministry; and if, therefore, it can be proved, that it was not given to him with reference to his miraculous conception, it must follow that it was given on grounds independent of his *office*, and independent of the circumstances of his *birth*: and that, therefore, he was in a *higher nature* than his human, and for a higher reason than an *official* one, the "Son of God."

Now this is, I think, very easily and conclusively proved. As soon as the Baptist John had heard this testimony, and seen this descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, he tells us that he "bore record that this is the SON OF GOD:"—the Messiah, we grant, but not the Son of God, because he was the Messiah, but Son of God and Messiah also. This is clear, from the opinion of the Jews of that day, as before shown. It was to the Jews that he "bore record" that Jesus was the *Son of God*. But he used this title in the sense commonly received by his hearers Had he simply testified that he was the Messiah, this would not to them in general have expressed the idea which ALL attached to the name "Son of God," and which they took to involve a Divine character and claim. But in this ordinary sense of the title among the Jews, John the Baptist gave his testimony to him, and by that shows in what sense he himself understood the testimony of God to the Sonship of Jesus. So, in his closing testimony to Christ, recorded in John iii, he makes an evident allusion to what took place at the baptism of our Lord, and says, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." Here the love of the Father, as declared at his baptism, is represented as love to him as the Son, and all things being given into his hands, as the consequence of his being his beloved Son. "All things," unquestionably, imply all offices, all power and authority; all that is included in the offices of King, Messias, Mediator; and it is affirmed, not that he is Son, and beloved as a Son *because* of his being invested with these *offices*, but that he is invested with them, *because* he was the well-beloved Son; a circumstance which fully demonstrates that "Son of God" is not an official title, and that it is not of the same import as Messiah. To the transaction at his baptism our Lord himself adverts in John v, 37: "And the FATHER HIMSELF, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." For, as he had just mentioned the witness arising from his miraculous works, and, in addition to these, introduces the witness of the Father *himself* as distinct from the works, a personal testimony from the Father alone can be intended, and that personal testimony was given at his baptism. Now, the witness of the Father, on this occasion, is, that he was his beloved SON; and it is remarkable that our Lord introduces the Father's testimony to his *Sonship* on an occasion in which the matter in dispute with the Jews was respecting his claim to be the Son of God. The Jews denied that God was his Father in the sense in which he had declared him

to be so, and "they sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath; but said also that God was his Father, *making himself equal with God.*" In this case, what was the conduct of our Lord? He re-affirms his Sonship even in this very objectionable sense; asserts that "the Son doeth all things soever that the Father doeth," verse 19; that "as the Father raiseth the dead, so the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will," verse 21; that "all judgment has been committed to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father," verse 23; that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," verse 26; and then confirms all these high claims of equality with the Father, by adducing the Father's own witness at his baptism: "And the Father himself hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; and ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." (3) With respect to this testimony, two critical remarks have been made, which, though not essential to the argument, farther corroborate the views just taken. The one is, that in all the three evangelists who record the testimony of the Father to Christ at his baptism, the article is prefixed both to the substantive and the adjective. Matt. iii, 17, Ουτος εστιν ὁ ὑιος μυ ὁ αγαπητος, the most discriminating mode of expression that could be employed, as if to separate Jesus from every other who, at any time, had received the appellation of the Son of God: *This is that Son of mine who is the beloved.* In the second clause, "in whom I am well pleased," the verb in all the three evangelists is in the first aorist, εν ω ευδοκησα. Now, although we often render the Greek aorist by the English present, yet this can be done with propriety only when the proposition is equally true, whether it be stated in the present, in the past, or in the future time. And thus the analogy of the Greek language requires us not only to consider the name Son of God, as applied in a peculiar sense to

(3) Though the argument does not at all depend upon it, yet it may be proper to refer to Campbell's translation of these verses, as placing some of the clauses in this passage in a clearer light. "Now the Father, who sent me, hath himself attested me. Did ye never hear his voice, or see his form? Or, have ye forgotten his declaration, that 'ye believe not him whom he hath commissioned?'" On this translation, Dr. Campbell remarks, "The reader will observe, that the two clauses, which are rendered in the English Bible as declarations, are, in this version, translated as questions. The difference in the original is only in the pointing That they ought to be so read, we need not, in my opinion, stronge evidence than that they throw much light upon the whole passage. Our Lord here refers to the testimony given at his baptism; and when you read the two clauses as questions, all the chief circumstances attending that memorable testimony are exactly pointed out. 'Have ye never heard his *voice*, φωνη εκ των ουρανων; nor seen his *form?*' the σωματικον ειδος, in which, St. Luke says, the Holy Ghost descended. 'And have ye not his declaration abiding in you?' τον λογον, the words which were spoken at that time."

Jesus, but also to refer the expression used at his baptism to that intercourse which had subsisted between the Father and the Son, before this name was announced to men. (4)

The epithet "ONLY BEGOTTEN," which several times occurs in the New Testament, affords farther proof of the Sonship of Christ in his Divine nature. One of these instances only need be selected. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the ONLY BEGOTTEN of the Father, full of grace and truth." If the epithet only begotten referred to Christ's miraculous conception, then the glory "as of the only begotten" must be a glory of the human nature of Christ only, for that alone was capable of being thus conceived. This is, however, clearly contrary to the scope of the passage, which does not speak of the glory of the nature, "the flesh," which "THE WORD" assumed, but of the glory of the Word HIMSELF, who is here said to be the only begotten of the Fatner. It is, therefore, the glory of his Divine nature which is here intended. (5) Such, too, was the sense in which the primitive Church and the immediate followers of the apostles understood the title μονογενης, *only begotten, or only Son*, as Bishop Bull has shown at length, (*Judicium Eccles.*) and "to him and others," says Dr. Waterland, "I may refer for proof that the title, Son of God, or only-begotten Son in Scripture, cannot be reasonably understood either of our Lord's miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost, or of his Messiahship, or of his being the first begotten from the dead, or of his receiving all power, and his being appointed heir of all things. None of these circumstances, singly considered, nor all together, will be sufficient to account for the title *only Son*, or only begotten; but it is necessary to look higher up to the pre-existent and Divine nature of the *Word*, who was in the beginning *with God*, and was himself very God, before the creation, and from all eternity. Angels and men have been called sons of God, in an improper and metaphorical sense, but they have never been styled '*only begotten*,' nor indeed, '*sons*,' in any such distinguishing and emphatic manner as Christ is. They are sons by adoption, or faint resemblance; he is truly, properly, and eminently, Son of God. and, therefore, God, as every son of man is, therefore, truly man." The note in the Socinian version tells us, "that this expression does not refer

(4) "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, that is, have always been well pleased, am at present well pleased, and will continue to be well pleased." (*Macknight.*)

(5) "The glory *as* of the only begotten," &c. "The particle ως, *as*, is not here a note of similitude, but of confirmation, that this Son was the only begotten of the Father." (*Whitby.*) "This particle sometimes answers to the Hebrew *ach*, and signifies *certe*, truly." (*Ibid.*) So Schleusner, in voc. 15, *revera, vere* The clause may, therefore, be properly rendered, "The glory indeed, or truly of the only begotten of the Father."

to any peculiar mode of derivation or existence; but is used to express merely a higher degree of *affection*, and is applied to Isaac, though Abraham had other sons." Isaac is, however, so called, because he was the only child which Abraham had by his wife Sarah, and this instance is, therefore, against them. The other passages in this Gospel and in St. John's First Epistle, in which the term is used, give no countenance to this interpretation, and in the only other passages in the New Testament, in which it occurs, it unquestionably means an "only son or child." Luke vii, 12, "Behold there was a dead man carried out, the *only son* of his mother." Luke viii, 42, "For he had *one only* daughter." Luke ix, 38, "Master, look upon my son, for he is *my only* child." Here, then, on the one hand, there is no passage in which the epithet *only begotten* occurs, which indicates by any other phrase or circumstance, that it has the force of *well beloved;* while there are several, which, from the circumstances, oblige us to interpret it literally as expressive of a peculiar relationship of the child to the parent, an only, an only-begotten child. This is, then, the sense in which it is used of Christ, and it must respect either his Divine or human nature. Those who refer it to his human nature, consider it as founded upon his miraculous conception. It is, however, clear, that that could not constitute him a son, except as it consisted in the immediate formation of the manhood of our Lord by the power of God; but, in this respect, he was not the "*only begotten*," not the "*only Son*," because Adam was thus also immediately produced, and for this very reason is called by St. Luke, "the son of God." Seeing, then, that μονογενης, *only begotten*, does not any where import the affection of a parent, but the peculiar relation of an *only son;* and that this peculiarity does not apply to the production of the mere human nature of our Lord, the first man being in this sense, and for this very reason, "a son of God," thereby excluding Christ, considered as a man, from the relation of ONLY Son, the epithet can only be applied to the Divine nature of our Lord, in which alone, he is at once *naturally* and *exclusively* "the SON OF THE LIVING GOD."

All those passages, too, which declare that "all things were made by the *Son*," and that God "*sent* his Son," into the world may be considered as declarations of a Divine Sonship, because they imply that the CREATOR was, at the very period of creation, a SON, and that he was the SON OF GOD, when and consequently before, he was *sent* into the world; and thus both will prove, that that relation is independent either of his official appointment as Messiah, or of his incarnation. The only plausible objection to this is, that when a person is designated by a particular title, he is often said to perform actions under that title, though the designation may have been given to him subsequently. Certain acts may be said to have been done by the king, though, in fact, he performed them before his advancement to the throne; and we ascribe the

"Principia" to *Sir* Isaac Newton, though that work was written before he received the honour of knighthood. In this manner we are told, by those who allow the Divinity of Christ, while they deny his Divine Sonship, that, as Son of God was one of the common appellations of Christ among his disciples, it was natural for them to ascribe creation, and other Divine acts performed before the incarnation, to the Son, meaning merely that they were done by that same Divine person who in consequence of his incarnation and miraculous conception, became the Son of God, and was by his disciples acknowledged as such.

The whole of this argument supposes that the titles "THE SON," "THE SON OF GOD," are merely *human* titles, and that they are applied to Christ, when considered as God, and in his pre-existent state, only in consequence of that *interchange* of appellations to which the circumstance of the union of two natures, Divine and human, in one person, so naturally leads. Thus it is said, that the "Lord of glory" was "crucified;" that GOD purchased the Church "with his *own blood*;" that "THE SON OF MAN" was "in *heaven*" before the ascension. So also in familiar style, we speak of the Divinity of JESUS, and of the Godhead of the SON OF MARY. An interchange of appellations is acknowledged; but then even this supposes that some of them are designations of his Divine, while others describe his assumed nature; and the simple circumstance of such an interchange will no more prove the title SON OF GOD to be a *human* designation, than it will prove SON OF MARY to be a *Divine* one. Farther, if such an interchange of titles be thus contended for, we may then ask, which of the titles, in strict appropriation, designate the human, and which the Divine nature of our Lord? If "Son of God" be, in strictness, a human designation, and so it must be, if it relate not to his Divinity, then we may say that our Saviour, as God, has no distinctive name at all in the whole Scriptures. The title "GOD" does not distinguish him from the other persons of the trinity, and WORD stands in precisely the same predicament as SON; for the same kind of criticism may reduce it to merely an *official* appellative, given because of his being the medium of instructing men in the will of God; and it may, with equal force, be said that he is called "the Word" in his pre-existent state only, because he in time, became the Word, in like manner as, in time also he became the Son. The other names of Christ are all *official;* and as in the Scriptures we have no such phrase as "the *second person* in the trinity" and other theological designations, since adopted, to express the Divinity of Christ, the denial of the title SON as a designation of Divinity leads to this remarkable conclusion, (remarkable especially, when considered as coming from those who hold the Deity of Christ,) that we have not in Scripture, neither in the Old nor the New Testament, a single appellation which, in strictness and truth of speech, can be used to express the Divine person of him who

was made flesh and dwelt among us. If, then, an *interchange* of Divine and human designations be allowed, the title "SON OF GOD" may still be a Divine description for any thing which such an interchange implies; if it is not a designation of his Divinity, we are left without a *name* for our Saviour as God, and considered as existing before the incarnation, and so there can properly be no interchange of Divine and human titles at all.

But the notion that the title Son of God is an appellation of the human nature of our Lord, applied sometimes to him, when his Divine character and acts are distinctly considered, by a customary interchange of designations, is a mere assumption. There is nothing to prove it, while all those passages which connect the title "Son," immediately, and by way of eminence, with his Divinity remain wholly unaccounted for on this theory, and are, therefore, contrary to it. Let a few of these be examined. It is evident that, in a peculiar sense, he claims God as his Father, and that with no reference either to the incarnation or resurrection, or to any thing beside a relation in the *Divine* nature. So, when he had said to the Jews, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work;" the Jews so understood him to claim God for his Father as to equal himself with God—"they sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, πατερα ιδιον, HIS OWN PROPER FATHER, making himself EQUAL with God;" and, so far from correcting this as an error in his hearers, which he was bound to do by every moral consideration, if they had so greatly mistaken him, he goes on to confirm them in their opinion as to the extent of his claims, declaring, that "what things soever the Father doeth, these also doth the Son likewise; and that as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." In all this it is admitted by our Lord, that whatever he is and has is *from the Father;* which is, indeed, implied in the very name and relation of SON; but if this communication be not of so peculiar a kind as to imply an *equality* with God, a *sameness* of *nature* and *perfections*, there is not only an unwarrantable presumption in the words of our Lord, but, in the circumstances in which they were uttered, there is an equivocation in them inconsistent with the sincerity of an honest man. This argument is confirmed by attending to a similar passage in the tenth chapter of John. Our Lord says, "They shall never perish; my Father which gave them me is greater than I, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father ARE ONE. Then the Jews took up stones to stone him." And they assign, for so doing, the very same reason which St. John has mentioned in the fifth chapter: "We stone thee for blasphemy, because that *thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*" Our Lord's answer is: "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken," *i. e.* if the language of Scripture be unexceptionable, "say

ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" These words are sometimes quoted in support of the opinion of those who hold that our Saviour is called the Son of God, purely upon account of the commission which he received. "But the force of the argument and the consistency of the discourse require us to affix a much higher meaning to that expression. Our Lord is reasoning *a fortiori*. He vindicates himself from the charge of blasphemy in calling himself the Son of God, because even those who hold civil offices upon earth are called, in Scripture, gods. (6) But that he might not appear to put himself upon a level with them, and to retract his former assertion, 'I and my Father are one,' he not only calls himself 'him whom the Father hath sent into the world,' which implies that he had a being, and that God was his Father, before he was sent; but he subjoins, 'If I do not the *works of my Father*, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that *the Father is in me, and I in him*,' expressions which appear to be equivalent to his former assertion, 'I and the Father are one,' and which were certainly understood by the Jews in that sense, for as soon as he uttered them they sought again to take him." (*Hill's Lectures.*)

To these two eminent instances, in which our Lord claims God as his Father, in reference solely to his Divine nature, and to no circumstance whatever connected with his birth or his offices, may be added his unequivocal answer, on his trial, to the direct question of the Jewish council.—"Then said they all, Art thou the Son of God? and he saith unto them, Ye say that I am," that is, *I am that ye say*; thus declaring that, in *the very sense* in which they put the question, he was the Son of God. In confessing himself to be, in that sense, the Son of God, he did more than claim to be the Messiah, for the council judged him for that reason guilty of "*blasphemy*;" a charge which could not lie against any one, by the Jewish law, for professing to be the Messiah. It was in their judgment a case of *blasphemy*, explicitly provided against by their "law," which inflicted death upon the offence; but, in the whole Mosaic institute, it is not a capital crime to assume the title and character of Messiah. Why, then, did the confession of Christ, that he was the "Son of God," in answer to the interrogatory of the council, lead them to exclaim, "What need we any farther witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth—he is worthy of death." "We have a

(6) "This argument, which is from the less to the greater, proceeds thus: If those who having nothing Divine in them, namely, the judges of the great sanhedrim, to whom the psalmist there speaks, are called gods for this reason only, that they have in them a certain imperfect image of Divine power and authority, how much more may I be called God, the Son of God, who am the natural Son of God." (*Bishop Bull.*)

law, and by our law he ought to die." The reason is given, "*because he made himself* THE SON OF GOD." His "blasphemy" was alleged to lie in this; this, therefore, implied an invasion of the rights and honours of the Divine nature, and was, in their view, an assumption of positive Divinity. Our Lord, by his conduct, shows that they did not mistake his intention. He allows them to proceed against him without lowering his pretensions, or correcting their mistake; which, had they really fallen into one, as to the import of the title "Son of God," he must have done, or been accessary to his own condemnation. (7)

As in none of these passages the title Son of God can possibly be considered as a designation of his human nature or office; so, in the apostolic writings, we find proof of equal force that it is used even by way of *opposition* and *contradistinction* to the human and inferior nature. Romans i, 3, 4, "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." A very few remarks will be sufficient to point out the force of this passage. The apostle, it is to be observed, is not speaking of what Christ is officially, but of what he is personally and essentially, for the truth of all his official claims depends upon the truth of his personal ones: if he be a Divine person, he is every thing else he assumes to be. He is, therefore, considered by the apostle distinctly in his two natures. As a man he was "flesh," "of the seed of David," and a son of David; in a superior nature he was Divine, and the Son of God. To prove that he was of the seed of David, no evidence was necessary but the Jewish genealogies: to prove him Divine, or, as the apostle chooses to express it, "THE SON OF GOD," evidence of a higher kind was necessary, and it was given in his "resurrection from the dead." That "*declared him to be the Son of God with power*," or powerfully *determined* and *marked him out* to be the Son of God, a Divine person. That an opposition is expressed between what Christ was according to the flesh, and what he was according to a higher nature, must be allowed, or there is no force in the apostle's observation; and equally clear it must be, that the nature, put in *opposition* to the fleshly nature, can be no other than the Divine nature of Christ, the apostolic designation of which is the "SON OF GOD."

This opposition between the two natures is sufficiently marked for the purpose of the argument, without taking into account the import of the phrase in the passage just quoted, "according to the Spirit of holiness," which, by many critics, is considered as equivalent to "*according to his Divine nature.*"

(7) See this argument largely and ably stated in Wilson's "Illustration of the Method of explaining the New Testament, by the early opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ."

Because of the opposition, stated by the apostle, between what Christ was, κατα, *according to, in respect of* the flesh; and his being declared the Son of God with power, κατα, *according to, in respect of* "the Spirit of holiness;" Macknight, following many others, interprets the "Spirit of holiness" to mean the Divine nature of Christ, as "the flesh" signifies his whole human nature. To this Schleusner adds his authority, πνευ voce αγιωσυνη. "Summa Dei majestas et perfectio, Rom. i, 4, κατα πνευμα αγιωσυνης. Quoad vim suam et majestatem divinam. Similiter in vers. Alex. non solum, Heb. הוד, Psa. cxlv, 4, 5, sed etiam קדש respondet, Psa. xcvii, 12."

Doddridge demurs to this, on the ground of its being unusual in Scripture to call the Divine nature of Christ "the Spirit of holiness," or the "Holy Spirit." This is, however, far from a conclusive objection: it is not so clear that there are not several instances of this in Scripture; and certain it is, that the most ancient fathers frequently use the terms "*Spirit*," and "*Spirit of God*," to express the Divine nature of our Lord. "Certissimum est," says Bishop Bull, "Filium Dei, secundum Deitatis hypostasin in scriptis Patrum titulo *Spiritus*, et *Spiritus Dei* et *Spiritus Sancti* passim insigniri." To this we may add the authority of many other eminent critics. (8)

The whole argument of the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is designed to prove our Lord superior to angels,

(8) "We have observed so often before, that the SPIRIT in Christ, especially when opposed to the flesh, denotes his Divine nature, that it is needless to repeat it. Nor ought it to seem strange, that Christ, as the Son of God, and God, is here called the Spirit of holiness, an appellation generally given to the third person of the Divinity, for the same Divine and spiritual nature is common to every person of the trinity. Hence we have observed, that *Hermas*, a cotemporary of St. Paul, has expressly called the Divine person of the Son of God, a Holy Spirit." (*Bull.*) "When the term *Spirit* refers to Christ, and is put in opposition to the *flesh*, it denotes his Divine nature." (*Schættgen.*) The same view is taken of the passage by Beza, Erasmus, Cameron, Hammond, Poole, and Macknight. The note of Dr. Guyse contains a powerful reason for this interpretation. "If 'the Spirit of holiness' is here considered as expressive of the sense in which Christ is 'the Son of God,' it evidently signifies his Divine nature, in opposition to what he was according to the flesh; and so the antithesis is very beautiful between κατα πνευμα, *according to the Spirit*, and κατα σαρκα, *according to the flesh*. But if we consider it as *the principle* of the power by which Christ was raised from the dead, for demonstrating him to be the Son of God, it may signify either his own Divine nature or the Holy Spirit, the third person in the adorable trinity; and yet, unless his own Divine nature concurred in raising him from the dead, his resurrection, abstractedly considered in itself, no more proved him to be *the Son of God*, than the resurrection of believers, by the power of God, and by 'his Spirit who dwelleth in them,' Rom. viii, 11, prove any of them to be so." It is also in corroboration of this view that Christ represents himself as the agent of his own resurrection. "I lay down my life, and I HAVE POWER to take it again." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP."

and he adduces, as conclusive evidence on this point, that to none of the angels was it ever said, "Thou art my SON, this day have I begotten thee. And again, I will be to him a FATHER, and he shall be to me a SON." It is, therefore, clear, that on this very ground of *Sonship*, our Lord is argued to be superior to angels, that is, superior in *nature*, and in *natural relation* to God; for in no other way is the argument conclusive. He has his title Son, by INHERITANCE, that is, by *natural* and HEREDITARY right. It is by "*inheritance*" that he hath obtained a "more excellent name" than angels; that is, by his being OF the Father, and, therefore, by virtue of his Divine filiation. Angels may be, in an inferior sense, the sons of God by *creation;* but they *cannot inherit* that title, for this plain reason, that they are *created* not *begotten;* while our Lord inherits the "more excellent name" because he is "*begotten*," not *created*. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I BEGOTTEN thee?" (9) The same ideas of absolute Divinity, connect themselves with the title throughout this chapter. "THE SON," by whom "God in these latter days hath spoken to us," is "the brightness, the effulgence of his glory, and the express, or exact and perfect image of his person." But it is only to the Divine nature of our Lord that these expressions can refer. "The brightness of his glory" is a phrase in which allusion is made to a luminous body which is made visible by its own effulgence. The Father is compared to the original fountain of light, and the Son to the effulgence or body of rays streaming from it. Thus we are taught, that the essence of both is the same; that the one is inseparable from, and not to be conceived of without the other; consequently, that neither of them ever was or could be *alone*. The Son is declared to be of the same nature and eternity with the Father; "And from hence, more particularly, the Church seems to have taken the occasion of confessing in opposition to the Arian heresy, as we find it done in one of our creeds, that 'Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, was begotten of the Father before all worlds, that he is God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things are made.'" (*Stanhope.*) Certainly, this brightness, or effulgence from the Father is expressly spoken of the SON; but it cannot be affirmed of

(9) It may be granted, that κληρονομεω is not always used to express the obtaining of a thing by strict hereditary right; but also to acquire it by other means, though still the idea of *right* is preserved. The argument of the apostle, however, compels us to take the word in its primary and proper sense, which is well expressed in our translation *to obtain by inheritance*. "The apostle's argument, taken from the name Son of God, is this—he hath that name by inheritance, or on account of his descent from God; and Jesus, by calling himself *the only begotten of the Father*, hath excluded from that honourable relation angels and every other beings whatever." (*Macknight.*)

him with reference to his humanity; and if it must necessarily be understood of his superior, his Divine nature, it necessarily implies the idea which is suggested by Sonship. For if the second person of the trinity were *co-ordinate* and *independent*, in no good sense could he be the effulgence, the lustre of the glory of the Father. He might exhibit an equal and rival glory, as one sun equally large and bright with another; but our Lord would, in that case, be no more an effulgence of the glory of the Father than one of these suns would be an effulgence of the other. The "*express image* of his person" is equally a note of filial Divinity. The word χαραχτηρ signifies an impression or mark, answering to a seal or stamp, or die, and therefore an exact and perfect resemblance, as the figure on the coin answers to the die by which it is stamped, and the image on the wax to the engraving on the seal. It is impossible that this should be spoken of a creature, because it cannot be true of any creature; and therefore not true of the human nature of our Lord. "The sentiment is, indeed, too high for our ideas to reach. This, however, seems to be fully implied in it, that the Son is personally distinct from the Father, for the impression and the seal are not one thing, and that the essential nature of both is one and the same," (*Dr. P. Smith,*) since one is so the exact and perfect image of the other, that our Lord could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (1) Still, however, the likeness is not that of one *independent*, and *unrelated* being to another, as of *man* to *man*; but the more perfect one of *Son* to *Father*. So it is expressly affirmed; for it is "THE SON" who is this "express image:" nor would the resemblance of one independent Divine person to another come up to the idea conveyed by χαραχτηρ της υποστασεως. Both this and the preceding phrase, the "brightness of his glory," with sufficient clearness denote not only *sameness* of *essence* and *distinction* of *person*, but *dependence* and *communication* also; ideas which are preserved and harmonized in the doctrine of the SONSHIP of Christ, and *in no other*.

In the same conjunction of the term SON with ideas of absolute Divinity, the apostle, in a subsequent part of the same chapter, applies that lofty passage in the forty-fifth Psalm, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. The Socinian criticisms on this passage have already been refuted; and it is only necessary to remark on this passage as it is in proof of the *Divine* Sonship. It is allowed, by all who hold his Deity, that Christ is here addressed as a being composed of two natures, God and man. "The unction with the '*oil of gladness*,' and the elevation above his '*fellows*,' characterize the manhood; and the perpetual stability of his throne, and the unsullied

(1) "Imago majestatis Divinæ, ita, ut, qui Filium videt, etiam Patrem videat." (*Schleusner.*)

justice of the government, declare the GODHEAD." (*Bishop Horsley.*) He is, however, called the SON; but this is a term which could not characterize the Being here introduced, unless it agreed to his higher and Divine nature. The *Son* is addressed; that Son is addressed as *God*, as God whose throne is for ever and ever; and by this argument it is that the apostle proves the SON to be superior to angels.

A few other passages may be introduced, which, with equal demonstration, attach the term Son, eminently and emphatically, to our Lord's Divine nature.

"God sending his own SON, in the likeness of sinful flesh," Romans viii, 3. Here the person entitled the SON, is said to be sent in the likeness of sinful FLESH. In what other way could he have been sent, if he were *Son* only as a *man?* The apostle most clearly intimates that he was SON before he was sent; and that FLESH was the nature *assumed* by the Son, but not the nature in which he was the Son, as he there uses the term.

"Moses, verily, was faithful in all his house as a SERVANT, but Christ as a SON over his own house." "This is illustrative of the position before laid down, (verse 3,) that Jesus was counted worthy of more glory than Moses. The Jewish lawgiver was only 'as a SERVANT,' but Christ 'as a SON;' but if the latter were only a Son in a metaphorical sense, the contrast would be entirely destroyed; he could only be a servant, like Moses, and the grounds of his superiority, *as a Son*, would be completely subverted; he must, therefore, be a Son in respect to his Divine nature. In conformity with this conclusion, it is here said that Moses was faithful IN all his house as a servant in the Jewish Church, but Christ was faithful OVER his own house; over the Christian Church as its Lord and Master." (*Holden's Testimonies.*) "Moses erat εν τω οικω, et pertinebat ad familiam; Christus vero επι τον οικον, supra familiam, ut ejus præfectus et dominius." (*Rosenmuller.*) "He says that Moses was faithful as a servant—Christ as a *Son*, and that Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses. inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house; that is, the difference between Christ and Moses is that which is between him who *creates* and the thing *created.*" (*Bishop Tomline.*) To be a *Son* is then, in the apostle's sense of the passage, to be a *Creator;* and to be a servant, a *creature;* a decisive proof that Christ is called Son, as *God*, because he is put in contradistinction to a creature.

To these may be added all those passages in which the first person is called the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ; because as, when the persons are *distinctly* spoken of, it is clear, that he who produced the human nature of Christ, in the womb of the virgin, was the third person, a fact several times emphatically and expressly declared in the New Testament; so, as far as natural relation is concerned, the first

person can only have paternity with reference to the Divine nature of the Son; and we are reduced to admit, either that the terms Father and Son are wholly *figurative*, or that they express a *natural* relation, which relation, however, can only subsist between these *persons* in the Godhead.

"For," as it has been very justly observed, "at the very same time that our Lord, most expressly, calls the *first* person of the Godhead his Father, he makes the plainest distinction that is possible between the Father, as such, and the Holy Ghost. By the personal acts which he ascribes to the Spirit of God, he distinguishes the *first* person, as his Father, from the *third* person of the Divine essence; for, he said, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth' This Comforter, said he, 'is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,' John xiv, 16, 17, 26; xv, 26. Here our Lord calls the *first* person, most expressly and undeniably, 'the Father,' and the *third* person, as expressly 'the Holy Ghost.' It is most evident, and beyond even the possibility of a doubt, that he does not, by these two appellatives, mean one and the self-same Divine person; for he says, he 'will pray the Father' to send the Comforter to his Church, calling him 'the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in *his* name.' And he sends 'the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, from the Father, which proceedeth from the Father.' Therefore, the Holy Ghost is not that Father, nor the self-same subsistent as that Father, nor is the creation of the human nature the only begetting, or the Scriptural Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ; for, if this were really so, the Father would be sending forth the Father, and the Father would be proceeding from the Father, and the Son would be praying for all this. But these are absurdities too glaring to be indulged for a single moment by common sense; so that we conceive it must be as clear as the light of heaven, that the first and second persons of the Godhead are to each other a Father and a Son in the Divine essence." (*Martin on the Eternal Sonship of Christ.*)

Thus, then, from the import of these passages, and many others might be added, were it necessary, I think that it is established, that the title SON OF GOD is not an appellative of the human nature applied by metonymy to the Divine nature, as the objectors say, and that it cannot, on this hypothesis, be explained. As little truth will be found in another theory, adopted by those who admit the Divinity of our Lord, but deny his eternal filiation;—that he is called "Son of God" on account of his *incarnation:* that in the Old Testament he was so called in *anticipation* of this event, and in the New because of the fact that he was God manifest in the flesh.

As, however, all *such* persons acknowledge the title "Son of God" to be a *descriptive*, not an arbitrary title, and that it has its foundation in some real *relation*; so, if the incarnation of Christ be the foundation of that title, it must be used with reference either to the nature in which he was incarnated, that is to say, his *manhood*; or to that which incarnated itself, that is to say, his *Godhead*; or to the *action* of incarnation that is the act of assuming our nature. If the first be allowed, then this is saying no more than that he is the Son of God, because of his miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin, which has been already refuted. If the second, then it is yielded, that, with reference to the Godhead, he is the Son, which is what we contend for; and it is allowed, that the "holy thing," or offspring, born of Mary, is, *therefore*, called the Son of God, not because his humanity was formed in her womb immediately by God; but, as it is expressly stated in Luke i, 35, because "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," the effect of which would be the assumption of humanity by the Divine nature of him who is, in that nature, *the Son*; and that the holy offspring should, on that account, be called the Son of God. This would fully allow the doctrine of Christ's Divine Sonship, and is, probably, the real import of the important passage referred to. (2) But if the title Son is given to Christ, neither with reference to the miraculous conception of the human nature, nor yet because the higher nature united to it in one person is, eminently and peculiarly, the Son of God; then it only remains to those who refer the title to the incarnation of our Lord, to urge that it is given to him with reference to the *act* of incarnation, that is to say, the act of

(2) Many interpreters understand by "the POWER OF THE HIGHEST," which overshadowed the virgin, the second person of the trinity, who then took part of *our* nature. See Wolfii Cur. in loc. Most of them, however, refer both clauses to the Holy Spirit. But still, if the reason why the "holy thing," which was to be born of Mary, derived its special and peculiar sanctity from the personal union of the Divinity with the manhood, the reason of its being called the Son of God will be found rather in that to which the humanity was thus united than in itself. The remarks of Professor Kidd, in his "Dissertation on the Eternal Sonship of Christ," are also worthy consideration. "Our Lord's human nature had never subsistence by itself." "That nature never had personality of itself." "Hence our Lord is the Son of God, with respect to his Divine nature, which alone was capable of Sonship. The question to be decided is, what object was termed the Son of God? Was it the human nature considered by itself? This it could not be, seeing that the humanity never existed by itself, without inhering in the Divinity. Was it the humanity and Divinity, when united, which, in consequence of their union, obtained this as a mere appellation? We apprehend that it was not. We conceive, that the peculiarly appropriate name of our Lord's Divine person is Son of God—that his *person* was not changed by the assumption of humanity, and that it is his eternal person, in the complex natures of Divinity and humanity, which is denominated Son of God."

assuming our nature. Now, it is impossible to maintain this, because it has no support from Scripture. The passage in Luke i, 35, has been adduced, but that admits certainly only of one of the two interpretations above given. Either the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the virgin, and the overshadowing of the power of the Highest, refer to the immediate production of the humanity by Divine power, so that for this reason he is called the Son of God, which might be allowed without excluding a higher and more emphatic reason for the appellation; or it expresses the assumption of human nature through the "power of the Highest," by the Divine nature of Christ, so that "the holy offspring" should be called "the Son of God," not because a Divine person assumed humanity, but because that Divine person was antecedently the Son of God, and is spoken of as such by the prophets. The mere act of assuming our nature gives no idea of the relationship of a Son; it is neither a *paternal* nor a *filial* act in any sense, nor expresses any such relation. It was an act of the *Son* alone; "forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, HE ALSO TOOK PART of the same;" and, as his own act, it could never place him in the relation of Son to the Father. It was done, it is true, in pursuance of the will of the Father, who "sent him" on this errand of mercy into the world; but it was still an act done by the Son, and could not lay the foundation of a filial title and character. This hypothesis cannot, therefore, be supported. If, then, the title "SON OF GOD," as given to our Lord, is not used chiefly, probably not at all, with reference to his miraculous conception; if it is not an appellative of his human nature, occasionally applied to him when Divine acts and relations are spoken of, as any other human appellation, by metonymy, might be applied; if it is not given him simply because of his assuming our nature; if we find it so used, that it can be fully explained by no office with which he is invested and by no event of his mediatorial undertaking; it then follows, that it is a title characteristic of his mode of existence in the Divine essence, and of the relation which exists between the first and second persons in the ever blessed trinity. Nor is it to be regarded as a matter of indifference, whether we admit the eternal filiation of our Lord, provided we acknowledge his Divinity. It is granted, that some divines, truly decided on this point, have rejected the Divine Sonship. But in this they have gone contrary to the judgment of the Churches of Christ in all ages; and they would certainly have been ranked among heretics in the first and purest times of the primitive Church, as Bishop Bull has largely and most satisfactorily shown in his "Judgment of the Catholic Church;" nor would their professions of faith in the Divinity of Christ have secured them from the suspicion of being allies in some sort of the common enemies of the faith, nor have been sufficient to guard them from the anathemas with which the fathers so carefully guarded

the sacred doctrine of Scripture respecting the person of our Lord. Such theologians have usually rejected the doctrine, too, on dangerous grounds, and have resorted to modes of interpretation, so forced and unwarrantable, that, if turned against the doctrines which they themselves hold sacred, would tend greatly to unsettle them. In these respects they have often adopted the same modes of attack, and objections of the same character, as those which Arians and Socinians have wielded against the doctrine of the trinity itself, and have thus placed themselves in suspicious company and circumstances. The very allegation that the Divine Sonship of Christ is a mere speculation, of no importance, provided his Divinity be held, is itself calculated to awaken vigilance, since the most important doctrines have sometimes been stolen away "while men have slept," and the plea which has lulled them into security has always been, that they were not fundamental. I would not, indeed, say that the doctrine in question is fundamental. I am not indisposed to give up that point with Episcopius and Waterland, who both admitted the Divine Sonship, though I would not concede its fundamental character on the same grounds as the former, but with the caution of the latter, who had views much more correct on the question of fundamental truths. But, though the Sonship of Christ may be denied by some who hold his Divinity, they do not carry out their own views into their logical conclusions, or it would appear that their notions of the TRINITY greatly differ, *in consequence*, from those which are held by the believers in this doctrine; and that on a point, confessedly *fundamental*, they are, in some important respects, at issue with the orthodox of all ages. This alone demands their serious reflection, and ought to induce caution; but other considerations are not wanting to show that points of great moment are involved in the denial or maintenance of the doctrine in question.

1. The loose and general manner in which many passages of Scripture, which speak of Christ as a Son, must be explained by those who deny the Divine filiation of Christ, seems to sanction principles of interpretation which would be highly dangerous, or rather absolutely fatal, if generally applied to the Scriptures.

2. The denial of the Divine Sonship destroys all *relation* among the persons of the Godhead; for no other relation of the hypostases are mentioned in Scripture, save those which are expressed by *paternity, filiation*, and *procession*; every other relation is merely *economical*; and these *natural* relations being removed, we must then conceive of the *persons* in the Godhead as perfectly independent of each other, a view which has a strong tendency to endanger the unity of the essence. (3)

(3) "According to the opinion of the ancients, which is also the voice of common sense, if there were two unbegotten or independent principles in the

3. It is the doctrine of the Divine paternity only which preserves the Scriptural idea that the Father is the *fountain* of Deity, and, as such, the *first*, the *original*, the *principle*. Certainly, he must have read the Scriptures to little purpose, who does not perceive that this is their constant doctrine—that "*of* him are all things;" that though the Son is Creator, yet that it was "*by* the Son" the Father made the worlds: and that, as to the Son, he himself has declared, "that he lives by the Father," and that the Father hath given him to have LIFE IN HIMSELF, which can only refer to his Divine nature, nothing being the source of life in itself but what is *Divine*; a view which is put out of all doubt by the declaration, that by the gift of the Father, the Son hath life in himself, "AS *the Father hath life in himself*." But where the essential paternity of the Father and the correlative filiation of the Son are denied, these Scriptural representations have no foundation in fact, and are incapable of interpretation. The term Son at once preserves the Scriptural character of the Father, and sets up an everlasting barrier against the Arian heresy of inferiority of essence; for, as *Son*, he must be of the same essence as the Father.

4. The Scriptural doctrines of the perfect EQUALITY of the Son, so that he is truly God, equal in glory and perfection to the Father, being of the same nature; and, at the same time, the SUBORDINATION of the Son to the Father, so that he should be capable of being "*sent*," are only to be equally maintained by the doctrine of the Divine Sonship.—According to those who deny this doctrine, the Son might as well be the *first* as the *second* person in the Godhead; and the Father the

Divinity, the consequence would be, that not only the Father would be deprived of his pre-eminence, being of and from himself alone; but also, that there would necessarily be two Gods. On the other hand, supposing the subordination, by which the Father is God of himself, and the Son God of God, the doctors have thought both the Father's *pre-eminence* and the Divine *monarchy* safe." (*Bishop Bull.*)

"As it is admitted, that there are three persons in the Godhead, these three must exist, either independently of each other, or in related states. If they exist independently of each other, they are, then, each an independent person, and may act independently and separately from the rest; consequently, there would be three independent and separate Deities existing in the Divine essence" (*Kidd.*)

The orthodox faith keeps us at the utmost distance from this error. 'The Father," says Bishop Bull, "is the principle of the Son and Holy Spirit, and both are propagated from him by an *interior* production, not an *external* one.—Hence it is, that they are not only *of* the Father, but *in* him, and the Father *in* them; and that one person cannot be separate from another in the holy trinity, as three human persons, or three other subjects of the same species are separate. This kind of existing in, if I may so say, our divines call circumincession, because by it some things are very much distinguished from one another without separation; are in, and as it were, penetrate one another, without confusion." (*Judgment of the Catholic Church.*)

second as well as the first. The Father might have been *sent* by the Son, without incongruity; or either of them by the Holy Spirit. On the same ground, the order of the solemn Christian form of blessing, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, so often introduced in the New Testament, is grounded on no reason whatever, and might be altered at pleasure. These are most violent and repulsive conclusions, which the doctrine of the Sonship avoids, and thus proves its accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

5. The love of the Father, in the gift of his Son, a doctrine so emphatically and so frequently insisted upon in Scripture, can have no place at all in the religious system of those who deny the relations of Father and Son to exist in the Godhead. This I take to be fatal to the doctrine; for it insensibly runs into the Socinian heresy, and restricts the love of the Father, in the gift of his *Son*, to the gift of a *man* only, if the Sonship of Christ be *human* only; and, in that case, the permission of the sufferings of Christ was no greater a manifestation of God's love to the world than his permitting any other good man to die for the benefit of his fellow creatures,—St. Paul, for instance, or any of the martyrs. Episcopius, though he contends against the doctrine of the Divine Sonship of our Lord being considered as fundamental, yet argues the truth of the doctrine on this very ground.

"We have thus far adduced those passages of Scripture from which we believe it evident, that something more is ascribed to Jesus Christ than can possibly belong to him under the consideration of man born of a virgin; nay, something is attributed to him which not obscurely argues, that, before he was born of the virgin, he had been, (*fuisse atque extitisse,*) and had existed as the Son of God the Father. The reasons derived from Scripture which seem to demonstrate this are the following:—

"First, from John v, 18, and x, 33, it is apparent, that Jesus Christ had spoken in such a manner to the Jews, that they either understood or believed that nothing less than this was spoken by Christ, that he attributed to himself something greater than could be attributed to a human being," &c. After proceeding to elucidate these two passages at some length, Episcopius adds,

"The second reason is, it is certain the charity and love of God is amazingly elevated and extolled, by which he sent his own and only-begotten Son into the world, and thus gave him up, even to the death of the cross, to save sinners, who are the sons of God's wrath.—(John iii, 16; Rom. v, 10, and viii, 32; 1 John iv, 9, 10.) But if *the only-begotten Son of God* has no signification *except Jesus with regard to his humanity and his being born of a virgin*, the reason is not so apparent why this love should be so amazingly enhanced, as it is when *God's only-begotten Son* signifies *the Son who was begotten of the Father before*

all ages. For that Son, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was born of her for this very purpose—that he might be delivered to death for sinners. But what pre-eminence of love is there in the fact of God delivering this, his Son, to death, whom it was his will to be born of Mary, and to be conceived of his Holy Spirit, with the intention that he should die for sinners? But if you form a conception of the Son of God, who was begotten of his Father before (*ante secula*) all worlds, whom it was not compulsory to send into the world, and who was under no obligation to become man; whose dignity was greater than allowed him to be involuntarily sent or to come into flesh, much less that he should be delivered to death; nay, who, as the only-begotten and sole Son, appeared dearer to the Father than to be thrust out from him into this misery. When you have formed this conception in your mind, then will the splendour and glory of the Divine charity and love toward the human race shine forth with the greater intensity." (*Episcopii Inst. Theol.*)

To the doctrine of our Lord's eternal Sonship some objections have been made, drawn from the supposed reason and nature of things; but they admit of an easy answer. The first is, "If the Son be of the Father in any way whatsoever, there must have been a commencement of his existence." To this objection the following is a satisfactory answer:—

"As sure, they are ready to argue, as every effect is posterior to its cause, so must Christ have been posterior to that God of whom he is the effect, or emanation, or offspring, or Son, or image, or by whatever other name you please to call him. Hence a Socinian writer says, 'The invention of men has been long enough upon the rack to prove, in opposition to common sense and reason, that an effect may be co-eternal with the unoriginate cause that produced it. But the proposition has mystery and falsehood written in its forehead, and is only fit to be joined with transubstantiation, and other mysteries of the same nature.' If these terms are properly taken, it will be found, that though every effect may be said to be posterior to its cause, it is merely in the order of nature, and not of time; and, in point of fact, every effect, properly so called, is co-existent with its cause, and must, of necessity, exactly answer to it, both in magnitude and duration; so that an actually infinite and eternal cause implies an actually infinite and eternal effect.

"Many seem to imagine, as the words, cause and effect, must be placed one after the other, and the thing intended by the latter is different from what is meant by the former, that, therefore, a cause must precede its effect, at least some very short time. But they ought to consider, that if any thing be a cause, it is a cause. It cannot be a cause and the cause of nothing; no, not for the least conceivable space of time. Whatever effect it may produce hereafter, it is not the actual

cause of it till it is actually in being; nor can it be in the very nature of things.

"Now, suppose I should call the Son of God the infinite and eternal effect of an infinite and eternal cause; however the terms of the proposition might be cavilled with, and however sophistry avail itself of the imperfection of human language and the ambiguity of words to puzzle the subject, in the sense in which I take the terms, cause and effect, the proposition is true, and cannot be successfully controverted. And though I would by no means affect such language, yet I should be justified in its use by the early orthodox writers of the Church, both Greek and Latin, (4) who do not hesitate to call the Father the cause of the Son; though the Latins generally preferred using the term *principium*, which, in such a connection, is of the same import as cause. Nor can we consider the following words of our blessed Redeemer in any other view: 'I live by the Father,' John vi, 57, and 'As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,' John v, 26. Such language can never be understood of the mere humanity of Christ. When the early ecclesiastical writers used the terms in question, it was not with the most distant intention of intimating any inferiority of nature in the Son. And when they called him 'God of God,' they never meant to represent him as a creature. Therefore, it was added to the expression, in the Nicene Creed, 'Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, *not made*, being of one substance,' or nature, 'with the Father and the Maker of all things.' They neither confound the persons, nor divide the substance of the Godhead. And we shall soon see that, in this, they followed the obvious and undoubted meaning of the word of God. They made use of the very best terms they could find in human language, to explain the truth of God, in a most important article of faith, and to defend it against the insidious attacks of heresy. And if those who affect to despise them would study their writings with candour, they would find that, though they were men, and as such liable to err, they were great men, and men who thought as well as wrote; who thought deeply on the things of God, and did not speak at random.

"Some persons think they reduce the doctrine, in question, to an absurdity, by saying, 'If the Father generate the Son, he must either be always generating him, or an instant must be supposed when his generation was completed. On the former supposition, the Son is and must ever remain imperfect, and, in fact, ungenerated; on the latter, we must allow that he cannot be eternal.' No one can talk in this manner who has not first confounded time with eternity, the creature with the Creator; beings whose existence, and modes, and relations are swallowed

(4) See Bull's Defensio Fidei Nicaenae, and the notes of Bishop Pearson's most excellent work on the Creed

up and lost in the Divine eternity and immensity with him who is, in all essential respects, eternal and infinite. The orthodox maintain that the Son of God is what he is from everlasting, as well as the Father. His generation no more took place in any imaginary point of eternity than it took place in time. Indeed all duration, which is commenced, is time, and time it must ever remain. Though it may never end, it can never be actual eternity; nor can any being, whose existence has commenced, ever become actually eternal. The thing implies a contradiction in terms.

"The nature of God is perfect from everlasting; and the generation of the Son of God was no voluntary and successive act of God, but something essential to the Godhead, and therefore natural and eternal. We may illustrate this great subject, though we can never fully comprehend it. All natural agents, as we call them, act or operate uniformly and necessarily. If they should change their action or operation, we should immediately infer a change of their nature. For their existence, in a certain state, implies that action or operation. They act or operate by, what we call, a necessity of nature, or, as any plain uneducated man would express himself, it is their nature so to do. Thus the fountain flows. Thus the sun shines. Thus the mirror reflects whatever is before it. No sooner did the fountain exist, in its natural state, than it flowed. No sooner did the sun exist, in its natural state, than it shone. No sooner did the mirror exist, in its natural state, than it reflected the forms placed before it. These actions or operations are all successive, and are measured by time, because the things from whence they result exist in time, and their existence is necessarily successive. But had the fountain existed from everlasting, in its natural state, from everlasting it must have flowed. Had the sun so existed, so it must have shone. Had the mirror so existed, so it must have reflected whatever was before it. The Son of God is no voluntary effect of the Father's power and wisdom, like the created universe, which once did not exist, and might never have existed, and must, necessarily, be ever confined within the bounds of time and space: he is the natural and necessary, and therefore the eternal and infinite birth of the Divine fecundity, the boundless overflow of the eternal fountain of all existence and perfection, the infinite splendour of the eternal sun, the unspotted mirror and complete and adequate image, in whom may be seen all the fulness of the Godhead. This places the orthodox faith at an equal distance from the Sabellian and Arian heresies, and will ever make that distance absolutely infinite. This is no figure of speech, but a most sober truth." (*France's Three Discourses on the Person of Christ.*)

In the eloquent and forcible passage just quoted, the opposition between a *necessary* and a *voluntary* effect is to be understood of *arbitrary* will; for, otherwise, the ancients scrupled not to say, that the generation

tion of the Son was with the will of the Father; some, that he could not but *eternally* will it, as being *eternally* good; others, that, since the *will* of God is God himself, as much as the *wisdom* of God is God himself, whatever is the fruit and product of God, is the fruit and product of his will, wisdom, &c; and so the Son, being the perfect image of the Father, is substance of substance, wisdom of wisdom, will of will, as he is light of light, and God of God, which is St. Austin's doctrine. That the generation of the Son may be by *necessity of nature*, without excluding the *concurrence* or *approbation* of the will, in the sense of consent, approbation, and acquiescence, is shown by Dr. Waterland, in his "Defence of Queries," and to that the reader who is curious in such distinctions is referred. They are distinctions, however, the subtlety of which will often be differently apprehended by different minds, and they are, therefore, scarcely allowable, except when used defensively, and to silence an opposer who resorts to subtletics for the propagation of error. The sure rock is the testimony of GOD, which admits of no other consistent interpretation than that above given. This being established, the incomprehensible and mysterious considerations, connected with the doctrine, must be left among those deep things of God which, in the present state at least, we are not able to search and fathom. For this reason, the attempts which have been made to indicate, though faintly, the *manner* of the generation of the Son are not to be commended. Some of the Platonizing fathers taught, that the existence of the Son flowed necessarily from the Divine intellect exerted *on itself* The schoolmen agitated the question, whether the Divine generation was effected by *intellect* or by *will*. The Father begetting a Son, the exact counterpart and equal of himself, by *contemplating* and *exerting* his intelligence upon himself, is the view advocated by some divines, both of the Romish and Protestant communions. Analogies have also been framed between the generation of the Son by the Father and the mind's generation of a conception of itself in thought. Some of these speculations are almost obsolete; others continue to this day. It ought, however, to be observed, that they are wholly unconnected with the fact, as it is stated, authoritatively and doctrinally stated, in Scripture. These are atmospheric halos about the sun of revelation, which, in truth, are the product of a lower region, though they may seem to surround the orb itself. Of these notions Zanchius has well observed, "As we have no proof of these from the word of God, we must reject them as rash and vain, that is, if the thing be positively asserted so to be." Indeed, we may ask, with the prophet, "*Who shall disclose his* GENERATION?" On this subject, Cyril of Jerusalem wisely says, "Believe, indeed, that God has a Son; but to know *how* this is possible be not curious. For if thou searchest, thou shalt not find. Therefore, elevate not thyself, in the attempt,) lest thou fall. Be careful to understand those things

alone which are delivered to thee as commands. First, declare to me *who is the Father*, and then thou wilt acknowledge the Son. But if thou canst not ascertain (cognoscere) the nature of the Father, display no curiosity about knowing the mode of the Son. With regard to thyself, it is sufficient for all the purposes of godliness to know, that *God has one only Son.*"

Proved then, as I think it irrefragably is, by Scripture testimony that the title "SON OF GOD" contains a revelation of the Divinity of our Lord, as a person of the same *nature* and *essence* with the Father, we may proceed to another of the most emphatic and celebrated appellations of our blessed Saviour—"THE WORD."

Under this title our Saviour is abruptly announced in the introduction to St. John's Gospel, for that he is intended cannot be a matter of doubt. In the 5th verse, "*the Word*" is called "*the Light.*" In verse 7, John Baptist is said to bear witness of that "Light." Again, in verse 14, the Word is said to have been made flesh, and to have dwelt among us; and, in verse 15, that "John bears witness of him." "The Word" and "the Light," to whom John bears witness, are names, therefore, of the same Being; and that Being is, in verse 17, declared to be Jesus Christ. (5)

The manner in which St. John commences his Gospel is strikingly different from the introductions to the histories of Christ by the other evangelists; and no less striking and peculiar is the title under which he announces him—"THE WORD." It has, therefore, been a subject of much inquiry and discussion, from whence this evangelist drew the use of this appellation, and what reasons led him, as though intending to solicit particular attention, to place it at the very head of his Gospel. That it was for the purpose of establishing an express *opinion*, as to the personal character of him whom it is used to designate, is made more than probable from the predominant character of the whole Gospel, which is more copiously *doctrinal*, and contains a record more full of what Jesus "*said*," as well as "*did*," than the others.

As to the source from which the term "Logos" was drawn by the apostles, some have held it to be taken from the Jewish Scriptures; others, from the Chaldee paraphrases; others from Philo and the Hellenizing Jews. The most natural conclusion certainly appears to be, that, as St. John was a plain, "unlearned" man, chiefly conversant in the Holy Scriptures, he derived this term from the sacred books of his own nation, in which the Hebrew phrase *Dabar Jehovah*, the Word of

(5) "Per τον λογον intelligi Christum, caret dubio, Nam v. 6, 7, Scriptor dicit, Joannem Baptistam dehoc λογω testimonium dixisse; constat autem eum de *Christo* dixisse testimonium; et v. 14, sequiter, λογον hominem esse factum, et Apostolos hujus λογου, hominis facti, vidisse dignitatem; atqui Christi majesta tam quotidie oculis videbant." (*Rosenmuller.*)

Jehovah, frequently occurs in passages which must be understood to speak of a *personal* Word, and which phrase is rendered λογος κυριου by the Septuagint interpreters. Certainly, there is not the least evidence in his writings, or in his traditional history, that he ever acquainted himself with Philo or with Plato; and none, therefore, that he borrowed the term from them, or used it in any sense approaching to or suggested by these refinements:—In the writings of St. Paul there are allusions to poets and philosophers; in those of St. John, none. We have already seen that the Hebrew Scriptures contain frequent intimations of a distinction of persons in the Godhead: that one of these Divine persons is called JEHOVAH; and though manifestly represented as existing distinct from the Father, is yet arrayed with attributes of Divinity, and was acknowledged by the ancient Jews to be, in the highest sense, "*their God*," the God with whom, through all their history, they chiefly "*had to do.*" This Divine person we have already proved to have been spoken of by the prophets as the future Christ; we have shown, too, that the evangelists and apostles represent Jesus as that Divine person of the prophets; and, if in the writings of the Old Testament, he is also called "THE WORD," the application of this term to our Lord is naturally accounted for. It will then appear to be a *theological*, not a *philosophic* appellation, and one which, previously even to the time of the apostle, had been stamped with the authority of inspiration. It is not, indeed, frequently used in the Old Testament, which may account for its not being adopted as a prominent title of Christ by the other evangelists and apostles; but that, notwithstanding this infrequency, it is thus used by St. John has a sufficient reason, which shall be presently adduced.

In Genesis xv, 1, we are told, that "the WORD of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Here the WORD of the Lord is the speaker—"the Word came—saying:" a mere word may be spoken or said; but a personal Word only can *say*, "*I* am thy shield." The pronoun *I* refers to the whole phrase, "the Word of Jehovah;" and if a *personal Word* be not understood, no person at all is mentioned by whom this message is conveyed, and whom Abram, in reply, invokes as "LORD GOD." The same construction is seen in Psalm xviii, 30, "The Word of the Lord is tried; *he* is a buckler to all that trust in him." Here the pronouns refer to "THE WORD of the Lord," in the first clause; nor is there any thing in the context to lead us to consider the Word mentioned to be a *grammatical* word, a verbal communication of the will of another, in opposition to a *personal* Word. This passage is, indeed, less capable of being explained, on the supposition of an ellipsis, than that in Genesis. In this personal sense, also, 1 Sam. iii, 21, can only be naturally interpreted. "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the

Lord revealed (showed) himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by THE WORD OF THE LORD." Here it is first declared, that the Lord appeared; then follows the manner of his appearance, or manifestation, "by the Word of the Lord." In what manner could he appear, except by his personal Word in vision? Again, a comparison of two passages will make it probable, that the *personal* WORD is intended in some passages, and was so understood by the ancient Jews, where there are no marked circumstances of construction to call our attention to it. In 2 Sam. vii, 21, we find, "For thy WORD'S sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things." But in the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xvii, 19, it is read, "O Lord, for thy SERVANT'S sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness." *Servant* is unquestionably an Old Testament appellation of Messiah; and not a few passages might be adduced, where the phrases "for thy *servant's* sake," "for thy *name's* sake," indicate a *mediatorial* character vested in some exalted and Divine personage. The comparison of these two passages, however, is sufficient to show, that a *personal* character is given to the *Word* mentioned in the former.

All that has been said by opposing criticism, upon these and a few other passages in which the phrase occurs, amounts to no more than that they *may* be otherwise interpreted, by considering them as elliptical expressions. The sense above given is, however, the natural and obvious one; and if it also accounts better for the frequent use of the terms "Word," "Word of the Lord," among the ancient Jewish writers, this is an additional reason why it should be preferred. The Targumists use it with great frequency; and should we even suppose Philo and the Hellenistic Jews to have adopted the term *Logos* from Plato and the Greeks, yet the favouritism of that term, so to speak, and the higher attributes of glory and Divinity with which they invest their Logos, is best accounted for by the correspondence of this term with one which they had found before, not only among their own interpreters, but in the sacred writings themselves.

Reference has been made to the *Targums*, and they are in farther evidence of the theological origin of this appellation. The Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament, were composed for the use of the common people among the Jews, who, after their return from captivity, did not understand the original Hebrew. They were read in the synagogues every Sabbath day, and with the phrases they contain all Jews would, of course, be familiar. Now, in such of these paraphrases as are extant, so frequently does the phrase "*the Word of Jehovah*" occur, that in almost every place where Jehovah is mentioned in the Old Testament as holding any intercourse with men, this circumlocution is used. "The Lord created man in his own image," is, in the Jerusalem Targum, "The *Word* of Jehovah created man." "Adam

and Eve heard the voice of the Lord God," is paraphrased, "they heard the voice of the *Word* of the Lord God." "The Lord thy God, he it is that goeth before thee," is in the Targum, "Jehovah thy God, his *Word* goeth before thee." The Targumists read, for "I am thy shield," Gen. xv, 1, "My *Word* is thy shield;" for "Israel shall be saved in the Lord," Isa. xlv, 17, "by the *Word* of the Lord;" for "I am with thee," Jer. i, 8, "My *Word* is with thee;" and in Psalm cx, 1, instead of "the Lord said unto my Lord," they read, "the Lord said unto his *Word*;" and so in a great number of places.

The Socinian answer is, that this is an idiom of the Chaldee language, and that "the word of a person is merely synonymous to himself." It must certainly be allowed that the *Memra* of the Chaldee paraphrasts has not in every case a personal sense, nor, indeed, has Logos, or Word by which it may be translated; but, as the latter is capable of being used in a personal sense, so is the former; and, if passages can be found in the Targums where it is evident that it is used personally and as distinct from God the Father, and cannot, without absurdity, be supposed to be used otherwise, the objection is fully invalidated. This has, I think, been very satisfactorily proved. So in one of the above instances, "They heard the voice of the Word of the Lord God walking in the garden." Here *walking* is undoubtedly the attribute of a *person*, and not of a mere voice; and that the *person* referred to is not the Father, appears from the author, *Tzeror Hammor*, who makes this observation on the place, "Before they sinned, they saw the glory of the blessed God speaking with *him*, that is, with God; but after their sin they only heard the voice walking." A trifling remark; but sufficient to show that the Jewish expositors considered the voice as a distinct person from God.

The words of Elijah, 1 Kings xviii, 24, "*I will call on the name of the Lord*," &c, are thus paraphrased by Jonathan: "I will pray in the name of the Lord, and he shall send his Word." The paraphrast could not refer to any message from God; for it was not an answer by word, but by fire, that Elijah expected. It has never been pretended, either by Socinians, or by the orthodox, that God the Father is said to be sent. If there be but one Divine person, by whom is he sent?

We learn from Gen. xvi, 7, &c, that "*the Angel of the Lord found Hagar by a fountain of water;*" that he said, "*I will multiply thy seed exceedingly*," and that "*she called the name of* JEHOVAH *that spake to her, Thou God seest me.*" It is evident that Hagar considered the person who addressed her as Divine. Philo asserts that it was the Word who appeared to her. Jonathan gives the same view. "She confessed before the Lord JEHOVAH, whose Word had spoken to her." With this the Jerusalem Targum agrees: "She confessed and prayed to the Word of the Lord who had appeared to her." It is in vain to say, in the Socinian sense, that God himself is here meant. For the paraphrasts

must have known, from the text, that the person spoken of is called an angel. If the Father be meant, how is he called an angel?

"They describe the Word as a *Mediator*. It is said, Deut. iv, 7, '*For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?*' Jonathan gives the following paraphrase of the passage: 'God is near in the name of the Word of the Lord.' Again, we find this paraphrase on Hos. iv, 9, 'God will receive the prayer of Israel by his Word, and have mercy upon them, and will make them by his Word like a beautiful fig tree.' And on Jer. xxix, 14, 'I will be sought by you in my Word, and I will be inquired of through you by my Word.' According to the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. xxi, 33, Abraham at Beersheba 'prayed in the name of the Word of the Lord, the God of the world.' But it is inconceivable that the paraphrasts did not here mean to describe the Word as a Mediator; especially as we know that the ancient Jews, when supplicating God, entreated that he would 'look on the face of his anointed.'

"They speak of *atonement* as made by this *Memra*. On Deut. xxxii, 43, Jonathan observes, 'God will atone by his Word for his land, and for his people, even a people saved by the Word of the Lord.'

"They describe the *Memra* as a *Redeemer*, and sometimes as the *Messiah*. These words, Gen. xlix, 18, '*I have waited for thy salvation*,' are thus paraphrased in the Jerusalem Targum: 'Our father Jacob said thus, My soul expects not the redemption of Gideon the son of Joash, which is a temporary salvation; nor the redemption of Samson, which is a transitory salvation; but the redemption which thou didst promise should come through thy *Memra* to thy people. This salvation my soul waits for.' In the blessing of Judah (ver. 10–12) particular mention is made of the King Messiah. It is a striking proof that by the *Memra* they meant him who was to appear as the Messiah, that in the Targum of Jonathan, verse 18 is thus rendered: 'Our father Jacob said, I do not expect the deliverance of Gideon the son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation; nor that of Samson the son of Manoah, which is a transient salvation. But I expect the redemption of the *Messiah*, the Son of David, who shall come to gather to himself the children of Israel.' It is evident that the one paraphrast has copied from the other; and as the one puts *Messiah* for *Memra*, it cannot well be denied that they had considered both terms as denoting the same person.

"They describe this *Memra* as *only begotten*, and, in this character, as the *Creator*. That remarkable verse, Gen. iii, 22, '*The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us*,' is paraphrased in a very singular manner: 'The Word of the Lord said, Behold, Adam whom *I have created*, is the only begotten in the world, as I am the *only begotten* in the highest heavens.' The language here ascribed to the Memra, with what reference to the text avails not in the present inquiry, is appli

cable to a person only; and it will not be pretended by our opponents, that it can apply to the *Father*. The person intended was believed to be the only-begotten Word.' How nearly does this language approach to that of inspiration! '*In the beginning was the Word. All things were made by him. We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*,' John i, 1, 3.

"If, therefore, the paraphrasts describe the *Memra* as one sent, as a Mediator, as one by whom atonement is made, as a Redeemer and the Messiah, and as only begotten; it is undeniable that they do not mean God the Father. If, notwithstanding, they ascribe personal and Divine characters to the Word, they must mean a distinct person in the Divine essence." (*Jamieson's Vindication.*)

The same personality and the same distinction we find in the passage, "God came to Abimelech;" in the Targum, "his *Word* came from the face of God to Abimelech." Equally express is the personal distinction in Psalm cx, 1, "Jehovah said unto his *Word*, Sit thou at my right hand." Here the Word cannot be the Jehovah that speaks, and a *person* only could sit at his right hand. This passage, too, proves that the ancient Jews applied the term Word to the Messiah; for, as we may learn from our Lord's conversation with the Pharisees, it was a received opinion that this passage was spoken of the Messiah.

Now, as some of the Targums still extant are older than the Christian era, and contain the interpretations of preceding paraphrases now lost; and as there is so constant an agreement among them in the use of this phrase, we can be at no loss to discover the source whence St. John derived the appellative Logos. He had found it in the Hebrew Scriptures, and he had heard it, in the Chaldee paraphrases, read in the synagogues, by which it was made familiar to every Jew. Dr. P. Smith, in his Scripture Testimony, hesitates as to the personal sense of the *Memra* of the Chaldean paraphrasts, and inclines to consider it as used in the sense of a reciprocal pronoun, denoting, in its usual application to the Divine Being, *God his very self*. On this supposition it is, however, impossible to interpret some of the passages above given. Its primary import, he says, "is *that*, whatever it may be, which is the MEDIUM of communicating the mind and intentions of one person to another." The Jews of the same age, or a little after, and Philo, he admits, used the term *Word* with a personal reference, for such "an *extension* and *reference* of the term would flow from the primary signification, a MEDIUM *of rational communication*;" but if Philo and those Jews thus *extended* the primary meaning of this word, why might not the Chaldee paraphrasts extend it before them? They did not invent the term, and affix to it its primary meaning. They found it in the Chaldee tongue, as we find *Word* in English; and that they sometimes use it in its primary sense is no proof at all

that they did not use it also in a personal or extended one. That a second Jehovah is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, as the *medium* of *communication* with men, cannot be denied, and *Memra* would, therefore, be, according to this explanation of its primary meaning, a most fit term to express his *person* and office. It is also a strong evidence in favour of the personal sense of this term, that "Maimonides himself, anxious as he was to obscure all those passages of Scripture that imply a Divine plurality, and to conceal every evidence of the Jews having ever held this doctrine, had not boldness enough to assert, that with the Chaldee interpreters, the *Word of God* was merely 'synonymous to *God*' himself. He knew that the Targums afforded such unquestionable evidence of the introduction of a distinct person under this designation, that every one of his countrymen, who was in the least acquainted with them, would give him the lie. Therefore he finds himself reduced to the miserable shift of pretending that, when the paraphrasts speak of the Word of the Lord, and use this expression where the name of God occurs in the original, they mean to describe a created angel." (6)

"Upon the whole, then," says Dr. Laurence, "how are we to determine the sense of this singular phrase? Although we consider it neither as a reciprocal, nor as intended to designate the second person in the trinity, who, becoming incarnate, lived and died for us, (of which, perhaps, the Targumists themselves might have had, at best, but indistinct or even incorrect ideas,) yet may we, most probably, regard it, in its general use, as indicative of a Divine person. That it properly means the *Word of the Lord*, or his will declared by a verbal communication, and that it is sometimes literally so taken, cannot be denied, but it seems impossible to consult the numerous passages, where personal characteristics are attributed to it, and to conceive that it does not usually point out a real person. Whether the Targumist contemplated this hypostatical word as a true subsistence in the Divine nature, or as a distinct emanation of Deity, it may be useless to inquire, because we are deficient in data adequate to a complete decision of the question." (*Dissertation.*)

Philo and the philosophic Jews may, therefore, be well spared in the inquiry as to the source from whence St. John derives the appellative Logos. Whether the Logos of Philo be a personified attribute or a person has been much disputed, but is of little consequence on this point. It may, however, be observed, that as the evidence predominates in favour of the *personality*, of the Logos of Philo, in numerous passages of his writings, this will also show, that not only the Jewish writers, who composed the paraphrases, and the common people among the Jews, in consequence of the Targums being read in the synagogues but also those learned men

(6) *Et fuit Verbum Domini ad me*, &c. Fieri quoque potest meo judicio ut Onkelos per vocem *Elohim*, Angelum intellexerit, &c. (*More Nevochim*, par i, c. 27, p. 33.)

who addicted themselves to the study of the Greek philosophy, were familiar with the idea of a Logos as a person distinct from God, yet invested with Divine attributes and performing Divine works. The question as to Philo is not whether he sometimes speaks of a personified *Logos*, that is, of an attribute or conception of God, arrayed in poetic, personal properties: this is granted; but whether he also speaks of a Logos, who is a real and a Divine person. Now, when he calls this Logos God, a second God, the Son of God, the first begotten, the beloved Son; speaks of him as superior to angels, as the Creator of the world, as seeing all things, as the Governor and Sustainer, as a Messenger, as the Shepherd of the flock; of men being freed from their sins by him, as the true High Priest, as a Mediator, and in other similar and personal terms, which may all be verified by consulting his writings, or the selections given in Kidd's Demonstration, Allix's Judgment, Bryant's Philo, Laurence's Dissertation, and other works; he cannot, by any possibility of construction, be supposed to personify the mere attribute of the reason or wisdom of God, or any conception and operation of the Divine intellect. This may be the only Logos of Plato; for, though the Christianized Platonists, of a lower period, used this term in a personal sense, there is but slender evidence to conclude that Plato used it as the name of a person *distinct* from God. Certain it is, that the Logos of Philo is arrayed in personal characters which are not found in the writings of Plato; a fact which will with great difficulty be accounted for, upon the supposition that the Jewish philosopher borrowed his notions from the Greek. Philo says, that "the Father has bestowed upon this *Prince* of angels his most *ancient* Logos, that he should stand as a *Mediator*, to judge between the creature and the Creator. He, therefore, *intercedes* with him, who is immortal, in behalf of mortals; and, on the other hand, he acts the part of an ambassador, being *sent* from the supreme King to his subjects. And this gift he so willingly accepts, as to glory in it, saying, I have stood between God and you, being neither *unbegotten* as God, nor *begotten* like mortals, but one in the middle, between two extremes, acting the part of a hostage with both; with the Creator, as a pledge that he will never be provoked to destroy or desert the world, so as to suffer it to run into confusion; and, with creatures, to give them this certain hope, that God, being reconciled, will never cease to take care of his own workmanship. For I proclaim peace to the creation from that God who removes war and introduces and preserves peace for ever." Now, when he expresses himself in this manner, who can reconcile this to a mere personification from the Greek philosophy? or suppose that Philo obtained from that ideas so evangelical, that, were there not good evidence that he was not acquainted with Christianity, we should rather conceive of him as of "a scribe," so far as this passage goes, "well instructed" in the kingdom of heaven? Even Dr. Priestley

acknowledges that Philo "made a much more *substantial* personification of the Logos than any of the proper Platonists had done." (*Early Opinions.*) *Substantial*, indeed, it is; for, although, in some passages, in the vigour of his discursive and allegorizing genius, "he enshrines his Logos behind such a veil of fancy, that we can scarcely discern his person in the sanctuary," yet in the above, and many other passages, "he draws aside the veil and shows him to us in his full proportions." (*Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.*) For what conceivable attribute of Deity, or ideal thing whatever, could any writer, allegorist as he might be, not insanely raving, call "Prince of angels," "Mediator," "Intercessor," "neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten like mortals," "an Ambassador" sent from God to men, interposing between an offended God to restrain his anger and to give "peace" to the world? Who could speak of these attributes or idealities in language anticipatory of an incarnation, as "a man of God, immortal and incorruptible," as "the man after the image of God," or ascribe to him a name "unspeakable and incomprehensible," and affirm that he is a "fabricator," or Creator, and "Divine, who will lie up close to the Father," exactly where St. John places him "in the very bosom of the Father." For, however mysteriously Philo speaks in other passages, he says nothing to contradict these, and they must be taken as they are. They express a real personality, and they show, at the same time, that they could not be borrowed from Plato. It is not necessary to enter into the question, whether that philosopher ascribed a real personality to his Logos or not. If he gives him a real and Divine personality, then the inference will be, that he derived his notion from the Jews, or from ancient patriarchal tradition; and it would be most natural for Philo, finding a personal and Divine Logos in Plato, to enlarge the scanty conceptions of the philosopher from the theology of his own country. On the other hand, if we suppose the Logos of Plato to be a mere personification, either Philo must have improved it into a real person, consistent with his own religion; or, sometimes philosophizing on a mere personified Logos, and sometimes introducing the personal Logos of his own nation and native schools, we have the key to all those passages which would appear inconsistent with each other, if interpreted only of one and the same subject, and if he were regarded as speaking exclusively either of a personified or a real Logos. "From all the circumstances it seems to be the most reasonable conclusion, that the leading acceptation of the Memra or Logos among the Jews of this middle age was to designate an intermediate agent; that, in the sense of a Mediator, between God and man, it became a recognized appellation of the Messiah; that the *personal* doctrine of the WORD was the one generally received, and that the *conceptual* notion which Philo interweaves with the other was purely his own invention, the result of his theological philosophy." (*Dr. Smith's Person of Christ*

As the doctrine of a *personal* Logos was not derived by Philo from Platonism, so his own writings, as decidedly as the reason of the case itself, will show, that the source from which he did derive it was the Scriptures and the Chaldee paraphrases, or, in other words, the established theology of his nation. Philo had not suffered the doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures, of a Jehovah acting in the name and under the commission of another Jehovah as well as his own, to go unnoticed The passages of the Old Testament, in which a personal Word, the *Dabar Jehovah*, occurs, had not been overlooked, nor the more frequent use of an equivalent phrase in the *Memra* of the paraphrasts. "There is a time," he observes, "when he (the holy Logos) inquires of some, *as of Adam*, Where art thou?" exactly corresponding with the oldest Targumists, "THE WORD of the Lord called to Adam." Again, with reference to Abraham and Lot,—"of whom (the Logos) it is said the sun came out upon the earth, and Lot entered into Sijor, and *the Lord* rained brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah. For the Logos of God, when he comes out to our earthly system, assists and helps those who are related to virtue," &c. So by Onkelos and Jonathan, the appearances of God to Abram are said to be appearances of the *Word*, and twice in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, "the *Word* of the Lord" is said to come to Abraham. The Being who appeared to Hagar, of whom she said, "Thou God seest me," Philo also calls the Logos. The Jehovah who stood above the ladder of Jacob and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father," has the same appellation, and he who spake to Moses from the bush. It is thus that Philo accords with the most ancient of the interpreters of his nation in giving the title Memra, Logos, or Word, to the ostensible Deity of the Jewish dispensation, in which, too, they were authorized by the use of the same term, in the same application, by the sacred writers themselves. Why, then, resort to Plato, when the source of the Logos of Philo is so plainly indicated? and why suppose St. John to have borrowed from Philo, when the Logos was an established form of theological speech, and when the sources from which Philo derived it, the Scriptures and the paraphrases, were as accessible to the apostle as to the philosophical Jew of Alexandria?

As Philo mingled Platonic speculations with his discourses on the real Logos of his national faith, without, however, giving up personality and Divinity; so the Jews of his own age mingled various crude and darkening comments with the same ancient faith drawn from the Scriptures, and transmitted with the purer parts of their tradition. The paraphrases and writings of Philo remain, however, a striking monument of the existence of opinions as to a distinction of persons in the Godhead, and the Divine character of a Mediator and interposing agent between God and man, as indicated in their Scriptures, and preserved by their theologians.

Celebrated as this title of the Logos was in the Jewish theology, it is not, however, the appellation by which the Spirit of inspiration has chosen that our Saviour should be principally designated. It occurs but a very few times, and principally and emphatically in the introduction to St. John's Gospel. A cogent reason can be given why this apostle adopts it, and we are not without a *probable* reason why, in the New Testament, the title SON OF GOD should have been preferred, which is, likewise, a frequent title of the Logos in the writings also of Philo.

"Originating from the *spiritual* principle of connection, between the first and the second Being in the Godhead; marking this, by a *spiritual* idea of connection; and considering it to be as close and as necessary as the *Word* is to the energetic *mind* of God, which cannot bury its intellectual energies in silence, but must put them forth in speech; it is too *spiritual* in itself to be addressed to the faith of the multitude. If with so full a reference to our *bodily* ideas, and so positive a *filiation* of the second Being to the first, we have seen the grossness of Arian criticism, endeavouring to resolve the doctrine into the mere dust of a figure; how much more ready would it have been to do so, if we had only such a *spiritual* denomination as this for the second? This would certainly have been considered by it as too unsubstantial for distinct personality, and therefore too evanescent for equal Divinity." (*Whitaker's Origin of Arianism.*)

Of the reason of its occasional use by St. John, a satisfactory account may also be given. The following is a clear abridgment of the ampler discussions on this subject which have employed many learned writers.

"Not long after the writings of Philo were published, there arose the Gnostics, a sect, or rather a multitude of sects, who having learnt in the same Alexandrian school to blend the principles of oriental philosophy with the doctrine of Plato, formed a system most repugnant to the simplicity of Christian faith. It is this system which Paul so often attacks under the name of 'false philosophy, strife of words, endless genealogies, science, falsely so called.' The foundation of the Gnostic system was the intrinsic and incorrigible depravity of matter. Upon this principle they made a total separation between the spiritual and the material world. Accounting it impossible to educe out of matter any thing which was good, they held that the Supreme Being, who presided over the innumerable spirits that were emanations from himself, did not make this earth, but that a spirit of an inferior nature, very far removed in character as well as in rank from the Supreme Being, formed matter into that order which constitutes the world, and gave life to the different creatures that inhabit the earth. They held that this inferior spirit was the ruler of the creatures whom he had made, and they considered men, whose souls he imprisoned in earthly tabernacles, as experiencing under his dominion the misery which necessarily arose from their connection

with matter, and as estranged from the knowledge of the true God. Most of the later sects of the Gnostics rejected every part of the Jewish law, because the books of Moses gave a view of the creation inconsistent with their system. But some of the earlier sects, consisting of Alexandrian Jews, incorporated a respect for the law with the principles of their system. They considered the Old Testament dispensation as granted by the Demiurgus, the maker and ruler of the world, who was incapable from his want of power, of delivering those who received it from the thraldom of matter: and they looked for a more glorious messenger, whom the compassion of the Supreme Being was to send for the purpose of emancipating the human race. Those Gnostics who embraced Christianity, regarded the Christ as this Messenger, an exalted Æon, who, being in some manner united to the man Jesus, put an end to the dominion of the Demiurgus, and restored the souls of men to communion with God. It was natural for the Christian Gnostics who had received a Jewish education to follow the steps of Philo, and the general sense of their countrymen, in giving the name Logos to the Demiurgus. And as *Christos* was understood from the beginning of our Lord's ministry to be the Greek word equivalent to the Jewish name Messiah, there came to be, in their system, a direct opposition between Christos and Logos. The Logos was the maker of the world: Christos was the Æon sent to destroy the tyranny of the Logos.

"One of the first teachers of this system was Cerinthus. We have not any particular account of all the branches of his system; and it is possible that we may ascribe to him some of those tenets by which later sects of Gnostics were discriminated. But we have authority for saying that the general principle of the Gnostic scheme was openly taught by Cerinthus before the publication of the Gospel of John. The authority is that of Irenæus, a bishop who lived in the second century, who in his youth had heard Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John, and who retained the discourses of Polycarp in his memory till his death. There are yet extant of the works of Irenæus, five books which he wrote against heresies, one of the most authentic and valuable monuments of theological erudition. In one place of that work he says, that Cerinthus taught in Asia that the world was not made by the supreme God, but by a certain power very separate and far removed from the Sovereign of the universe, and ignorant of his nature. (*Iren. contra Haer.* lib. iii, cap. xi, 1.) In another place he says, that John the apostle wished, by his Gospel, to extirpate the error which had been spread among men by Cerinthus; (*Iren. contra Haer.* lib. i, xxvi, 1;) and Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, says that John wrote his Gospel at the desire of the bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus and other heretics, and chiefly against the doctrines of the Ebionites, then springing up, who said, that Christ did not exist before he was born of Mary. (*Jerom. De Vit. Illust.* cap. ix.)

"From the laying these accounts together, it appears to have been the tradition of the Christian Church, that John, who lived to a great age, and who resided at Ephesus, in proconsular Asia, was moved by the growth of the Gnostic heresies, and by the solicitations of the Christian teachers, to bear his testimony to the truth in writing, and particularly to recollect those discourses and actions of our Lord, which might furnish the clearest refutation of the persons who denied his pre-existence. This tradition is a key to a great part of his Gospel. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, had given a detail of those actions of Jesus which are the evidences of his Divine mission; of those events in his life upon earth which are most interesting to the human race; and of those moral discourses in which the wisdom, the grace, and the sanctity of the Teacher, shine with united lustre. Their whole narration implies that Jesus was more than man. But as it is distinguished by a beautiful simplicity, which adds very much to their credit as historians, they have not, with the exception of a few incidental expressions, formally stated the conclusion that Jesus was more than man, but have left the Christian world to draw it for themselves from the facts narrated, or to receive it by the teaching and the writings of the apostles. John, who was preserved by God to see this conclusion, which had been drawn by the great body of Christians, and had been established in the epistles, denied by different heretics, brings forward, in the form of a history of Jesus, a view of his exalted character, and draws our attention particularly to the truth of that which had been denied. When you come to analyze the Gospel of John, you will find that the first eighteen verses contain the positions laid down by the apostle, in order to meet the errors of Cerinthus; that these positions, which are merely affirmed in the introduction, are proved in the progress of the Gospel, by the testimony of John the Baptist, and by the words and the actions of our Lord; and that after the proof is concluded by the declaration of Thomas, who, upon being convinced that Jesus had risen, said to him, 'My Lord, and my God,' John sums up the amount of his Gospel in these few words: 'These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,' *i. e.* that Jesus and the Christ are not distinct persons, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The apostle does not condescend to mention the name of Cerinthus, because that would have preserved, as long as the world lasts, the memory of a name which might otherwise be forgotten. But although there is dignity and propriety in omitting the mention of his name, it was necessary, in laying down the positions that were to meet his errors, to adopt some of his words, because the Christians of those days would not so readily have applied the doctrine of the apostle to the refutation of those heresies which Cerinthus was spreading among them, if they had not found in the exposition of that doctrine some of the terms in which the heresy was delivered: and as

the chief of these terms, Logos, which Cerinthus applied to an inferior spirit, was equivalent to a phrase in common use among the Jews, 'the Word of Jehovah,' and was probably borrowed from thence, John by his use of Logos, rescues it from the degraded use of Cerinthus, and restores it to a sense corresponding to the dignity of a Jewish phrase." (*Hill's Lectures.*)

The Logos was no fanciful term, merely invented by St. John, *pro re nata*, or even suggested by the Holy Spirit, as a suitable title for a prophet, by whom God chose to reveal himself or his Word. It was a term diversely understood in the world before St. John began his Gospel. Is it possible, therefore, that he should have used the term without some express allusion to these prevailing opinions? Had he contradicted them all, it would, of course, have been a plain proof that they were all equally fabulous and fanciful; but by *adopting the term*, he certainly meant to show that the error did not consist in believing that there was a Logos, or *Word* of God, but in thinking amiss of it. We might, indeed, have wondered much had he decidedly adopted the *Platonic* or *Gnostic* notions, in preference to the Jewish; but that he should harmonize with the latter is by no means surprising; first, because he was a Jew himself; and secondly, because Christianity was plainly to be shown to be connected with, and, as it were, regularly to have sprung out of Judaism. It is certainly, then, in the highest degree consistent with all we could reasonably expect, to find St. John and others of the sacred writers expressing themselves in terms not only familiar to the Jews under the old covenant, but which might tend, by a perfect revelation of the truth, to give instruction to all parties; correcting the errors of the *Platonic* and *oriental* systems, and confirming, in the clearest manner, the hopes and expectations of the Jews. (*See Nare's Remarks on the Socinian Version.*)

While the reasons for the use of this term by St. John are obvious, the argument from it is irresistible; for, first, the Logos of the evangelist is a PERSON, not an *attribute*, as many Socinians have said, who have, therefore, sometimes chosen to render it "wisdom." For if an attribute, it were a mere truism to say that it was in the beginning with God, for God could never be without his attributes. The apostle also declares, that the Logos was the *Light;* but that John Baptist was *not the Light.* Here is a kind of parallel supposed, and it presumes, also, that it was possible that the same character might be erroneously ascribed to both.

"Between person and person this may undoubtedly be the case; but what species of parallel can exist between man and an attribute? Nor will the difficulty be obviated by suggesting, that wisdom here means not the attribute itself, but him whom that attribute inspired, the man Jesus Christ, because the name of our Saviour has not yet been mentioned; because that rule of interpretation must be inadmissible, which at one time would explain the term Logos by an attribute, at another by

a man, as best suits the convenience of hypothesis, and because, if it be, in this instance, conceived to indicate our Saviour, it must follow, that our Saviour created the world, (which the Unitarians will by no means admit,) for the Logos, who was that which John the Baptist was not, *the true Light*, is expressly declared to have made the world." (*Lawrence's Dissertation on the Logos.*)

Again: the Logos was made flesh, that is, *became man;* but in what possible sense could an attribute become man? The Logos is "the only begotten of the Father;" but it would be uncouth to say of any attribute, that it is begotten; and, if that were passed over it would follow, from this notion, either that God has only one attribute, or that wisdom is not his only-begotten attribute. Farther, St. John uses terms decisively *personal*, as that he is GOD, not *Divine* as an attribute, but God *personally;* not that he was *in* God, which would property have been said of an attribute, but *with* God, which he could only say of a *person:* that "all things were *made* by him;" that he was "*in* the world;" that "*he came* to his own;" that he was "in the bosom of the Father;" and that "*he* hath declared the Father." The absurdity of representing the Logos of St. John as an attributive seems, at length, to have been perceived by the Socinians themselves, and their New Version accordingly regards it as a personal term.

If the Logos is a person, then is he Divine; for, first eternity is ascribed to him, "in the *beginning* was the Word." The Unitarian comment is, "from the beginning of his ministry, or the commencement of the Gospel dispensation;" which makes St. John use another trifling truism, and solemnly tell his readers, that our Saviour, when he began his ministry, was in *existence!*—"in the beginning of his ministry the Word *was!*" It is true that αρχη, the beginning, is used for the beginning of Christ's ministry, when he says that the apostles had been "with him from the beginning;" and it may be used for the beginning of any thing whatever. It is a term which must be determined in its meaning by the context; (7) and the question, therefore, is how the connection here determines it. Almost immediately it is added, "all things were made by him;" which, in a preceding chapter, has been proved to mean the creation of universal nature. He, then, who made all things was prior to all created things; HE WAS when they *began* to be, and before they began to be; and, if he existed before all created things, he was not himself created, and was, therefore, eternal. (8) Secondly, he is

(7) "Quotiescunque fit *principii* mentio, significationem illius ad id de quo accommodare necesse est." (*Beza.*)

(8) "Valde errant, qui εν αρχη interpretantur de initio Evangelio; haec enim sententiæ consilium Joannis, et sequens oratio aperte repugnat. Si vero ο λογος fuit jam tum, quum mundus esse cæpit, sequitur eum fuisse ante mundum condi tum; sequitur etiam eum non esse unam ex ceteris creatis rebus, quæ cum mundo esse cæperunt, sed alia natura conditione." (*Rosenmuller.*)

expressly called *God*, in the same sense as the Father; and thirdly, he is as explicitly said to be the Creator of all things. The two last particulars have already been largely established, and nothing need be added, except, as another proof that the Scriptures can only be fairly explained by the doctrine of a distinction of Divine persons in the Godhead, the declaration of St. John may be adduced, that "the Word was *with* God, and the Word was *God*." What hypothesis but this goes a single step to explain this wonderful language? Arianism, which allows the pre-existence of Christ *with* God, accords with the first clause, but contradicts the second. Sabellianism, which reduces the *personal* to an *official* and therefore a *temporal*, distinction, accords with the second clause, but contradicts the first; for Christ, according to this theory, was not with God in the beginning, that is, in eternity. Socinianism contradicts both clauses; for on that scheme Christ was neither *with* God "in the beginning," nor was he God. "The faith of God's elect" agrees with both clauses, and by both it is established, "The Word was *with* God, and the Word was GOD."

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRIST POSSESSED OF DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

HAVING considered the import of some of the titles applied to our Lord in the Scriptures, and proved that they imply Divinity, we may next consider the *attributes* which are ascribed to him in the New Testament. If, to names and lofty titles which imply Divinity, we find added attributes never given to creatures, and from which all creatures are excluded, the Deity of Christ is established beyond reasonable controversy. No argument can be more conclusive than this. Of the essence of Deity we know nothing, but that he is a Spirit. He is made known by his attributes; and it is from them that we learn, that there is an *essential* distinction between him and his creatures, because he has attributes which they have not, and those which they have in common with him, he possesses in a degree absolutely perfect. From this it follows, that HIS is a *peculiar* nature, a nature *sui generis*, to which no creature does or can possibly approximate. Should, then, these same attributes be found ascribed to Christ, as explicitly and literally as to the Father, it follows of necessity, that, the attributes being the same, the essence is the same, and that essence the exclusive nature of the Θεοτης, or "Godhead." It would, indeed, follow, that if but one of the *peculiar* attributes of Deity were ascribed to Christ, he must possess the whole, since they cannot exist separately; and whoever is possessed of one must be

concluded to be in possession of all. (9) But it is not one attribute only, but all the attributes of Deity which are ascribed to him; and not only those which are *moral*, and which are, therefore, capable of being communicated, (though those, as they are attributed to Christ in infinite degree and in absolute perfection, would be sufficient for the argument,) but those which are, on all sides, allowed to be *incommunicable*, and peculiar to the Godhead.

ETERNITY is ascribed to him. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the *Everlasting Father*, the Prince of Peace." "Everlasting Father" is variously rendered by the principal orthodox critics; but every rendering is in consistency with the application of a positive eternity to the Messiah, of which this is allowed to be a prediction. Bishop Lowth says, "the Father of the everlasting age." Bishop Stock, "the Father of Eternity;" *i. e.* the owner of it. Dathe and Rosenmuller, "*Æternus.*" The former considers it an oriental idiom, by which names of affinity, as *father*, *mother*, &c, are used to denote the author, or eminent possessor of a quality or object. Rev. i, 17, 18, "I am THE FIRST and THE LAST, I am he that liveth and was dead;" so also ch. ii, 8; and in both passages the context shows, indisputably, that it is our Lord himself who speaks, and applies these titles to himself. In chap. xxii, 13, also, Christ is the speaker, and declares himself to be "ALPHA and OMEGA, the BEGINNING and the END, the FIRST and the LAST." Now, by these very titles is the eternity of God declared, Isaiah xlv, 6, and xliii, 10 "I am the first, and I am the last: and beside me there is no God." "Before me was there no God formed, neither shall there be after me." But they are, in the book of Revelation, assumed by Christ as explicitly and absolutely; and they clearly affirm, that the Being to whom they are applied had no beginning, and will have no end. In Rev. i, 8, after the declaration, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord," it is added, "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Some have referred these words to the Father; but certainly without reason, as the very scope of the passage shows. It is Christ who speaks in the first person, throughout the chapter, when the sublime titles of the former part of the verse are used, and indeed, throughout the book; and to interpret this particular clause of the Father would introduce a most abrupt change of persons, which, but for a false theory, would never have been imagined. The words, indeed, do but express the import of the name Jehovah, so often given to Christ; and as, when the Father is spoken *of*, in verse 4, the same declaration is made concerning him which, in verse 8, our Lord makes

(9) "Attributa Divina arctissimo copulari vinculo, sic, ut nullum seperatim concipi queat, adeoque qui uno pollet, omnibus ornetur." (*Doederlein.*)

of himself, it follows, that if the terms "which was, and is, and is to come," are descriptive of the eternity of the Father, they are also descriptive of eternity as an attribute also of the Son. We have a similar declaration in Heb. xiii, 8, "Jesus Christ, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TO DAY, and FOR EVER," where eternity, and its necessary concomitant, immutability, are both ascribed to him. That the phrase, "yesterday, to-day, and for ever," is equivalent to eternity needs no proof; and that the words are not spoken of the *doctrine* of Christ, as the Socinians contend, appears from the context, which scarcely makes any sense upon this hypothesis, (*See Macknight,*) since a doctrine once delivered must remain what it was at first. This interpretation, also, gives a figurative sense to words which have all the character of a strictly literal declaration; and it is a farther confirmation of the literal sense, and that Christ is spoken of *personally*, that ὁ αυτος is the phrase by which the immutability of the Son is expressed in chapter i, verse 12: "*But thou art* ὁ αυτος, *the same.*" Peirce, in his Paraphrase, has well expressed the connection: "Considering the conclusion of their life and behaviour, imitate their faith; for the object of their faith, Jesus Christ, is the same now as he was then, and will be the same for ever." A Being essentially unchangeable, and therefore eternal, is the only proper object of an absolute "*faith.*" A similar and most solemn ascription of eternity and immutability occurs Heb. i, 10–12, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art THE SAME, AND THY YEARS SHALL NOT FAIL." These words are quoted from Psa. cii, which all acknowledge to be a lofty description of the eternity of God. They are here applied to Christ, and of *him* they affirm, that he was before the material universe—that it was created by him—that he has absolute power over it—that he shall destroy it—that he shall do this with infinite ease, as one who folds up a *vesture;* and that, amid the decays and changes of material things, he remains *the same.* The immutability here ascribed to Christ is not, however, that of a created spirit, which will remain when the material universe is destroyed; for then there would be nothing *proper* to Christ in the text, nothing but in which angels and men participate with him, and the words would be deprived of all meaning. His immutability and duration are peculiar, and a contrast is implied between his existence and that of all created things. They are *dependent,* he is *independent;* and his *necessary,* and therefore *eternal,* existence must follow. The phrase "ETERNAL LIFE," when used, as it is frequently, in St. John's Epistles, is also a clear designation of the eternity of our Saviour. "For the LIFE was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that ETERNAL

LIFE, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." In the first clause, Christ is called *the Life*, he is then said to be "*eternal*;" and, that no mistake should arise, as though the apostle merely meant to declare that he would continue for ever, he shows, that he ascribes eternity to him in his pre-existent state,—"that eternal life" which was WITH THE FATHER; and with him before he was "manifested to men." And eternal pre-existence could not be more unequivocally marked.

To these essential attributes of Deity, to be without beginning and without change, is added that of being extended through all space.—He is not only eternal, but OMNIPRESENT. Thus he declares himself to be at the same time in heaven and upon earth, which is assuredly a property of Deity alone. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which IS in heaven." The genuineness of the last clause has been attacked by a few critics; but has been fully established by Dr. Magee. (*Magee on the Atonement.*) This passage has been defended from the Socinian interpretation already, and contains an unequivocal declaration of ubiquity.

For "where two or three are gathered together in my name, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." How futile is the Socinian comment in the New Version! This promise is to be "limited to the apostolic age." But were that granted, what would the concession avail? In the apostolic age, the disciples met in the name of their Lord many times in the week, and in innumerable parts of the world at the same time, in Judea, Asia Minor, Europe, &c. He, therefore, who could be "in the midst of them," whenever and wherever they assembled, must be omnipresent. But they add, "by a *spiritual* presence, a faculty of knowing things in places where he was not present;" "a gift," they say, "given to the apostles occasionally," and refer to 1 Cor. v, 3. No such gift is, however, claimed by the apostle in that passage, who knew the affair in the Church of Corinth, not by any such faculty or revelation, but by "report," verse 1. Nor does he say, that he was present with them, but judged "*as though* he were present." If, indeed, any such gift were occasionally given to the apostles, it would be, not a "spiritual presence," as the New Version has it; but a *figurative* presence. No such figurative meaning is however hinted at in the text before us, which is as literal a declaration of Christ's presence every where with his worshippers as that similar promise made by Jehovah to the Israelites: "In all places where I record my name I will come to thee, and I will bless thee." At the very moment, too, of his ascension, that is, just when, as to his bodily presence, he was leaving his disciples, he promises still to be with them, and calls their attention to this promise by an emphatic particle, "And LO I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii, 20. The Socinians render "to the end of the age," that is, "the Jewish dispensation, till the destruction of Jerusa-

em." All that can be said in favour of this is, that the words *may* be so translated, if no regard is paid to their import. But it is certain, that, in several passages, "the end of the world," η συντελεια τυ αιωνος, must be understood in its popular sense. That this is its sense here, appears, first, from the clause "Lo I am with you ALWAYS," πασας ταις ημερας, "*at all times*;" secondly, because spiritual presence stands, by an evidently implied antithesis, opposed to bodily absence; thirdly, because that presence of Christ was as necessary to his disciples after the destruction of Jerusalem as till that period. But even were the promise to be so restricted, it would still be in proof of the omnipresence of our Lord, for, if he were present with all his disciples in all places, "always," to the destruction of Jerusalem, it could only be by virtue of a property which would render him present to his disciples in all ages. The Socinian Version intimates, that the presence meant is the gift of miraculous powers. Let even that be allowed, though it is a very partial view of the promise; then, if till the destruction of Jerusalem the apostles were "always," "at all times," able to work miracles, the power to enable them to effect these wonders must "always" and in all *places* have been present with them; and if that were not a human endowment, if a power superior to that of man were requisite for the performance of the miracles, and that power was the power of Christ, then he was really, though spiritually, present with them, unless the attribute of power can be separated from its subject, and the power of Christ be where he himself is not. This, however, is a low view of the import of the promise, "Lo I am with you," which, both in the Old and New Testament, signifies to be present with any one, to help, comfort, and succour him. "Ειναι μετα τινος, alicui adesse, juvare aliquem, curare res alicujus." (*Rosenmuller.*)

It is not necessary to adduce more than another passage in proof of a point so fully determined already by the authority of Scripture. After the apostle, in Col. i, 16, 17, has ascribed the creation of all things in heaven and earth, "visible and invisible," to Christ, he adds, "*and by him all things consist.*" On this passage, Raphelius cites a striking passage from Aristotle, De Mundo, where the same verb, rendered "*consist*," by our translators, is used in a like sense to express the constant dependence of all things upon their Creator for continued subsistence and preservation. "There is a certain ancient tradition common to all mankind, that all things *subsist* from and by God, and that no kind of being is self-sufficient, when alone, and destitute of his preserving aid." (1) The apostle then, here, not only attributes the creation, but the conservation of all things to Christ; but to preserve them his presence must be co-extensive with them, and thus the universe of matter and created spirits, heaven and earth, must be filled with his

(1) Raphelius in loc. See also Parkhurst's Lex

power and presence. "This short sentence implies that our Lord's presence extends to every part of the creation; to every being and system in the universe; a most striking and emphatical description of the omnipresence of God the Son." (*Holden's Scripture Testimonies.*)

To these attributes of essential Divinity is added, a PERFECT KNOWLEDGE of all things. This cannot be the attribute of a creature, for though it may be difficult to say how far the knowledge of the highest order of intelligent creatures may be extended, yet are there two kinds of knowledge which God has made peculiar to himself by solemn and exclusive claim. The first is, the perfect knowledge of the thoughts and intents of the heart. "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins," Jeremiah xvii, 10. "Thou, even thou only," says Solomon, "knowest the hearts of all the children of men," 1 Kings viii, 39. This knowledge is attributed to and was claimed by our Lord, and that without any intimation that it was in consequence of a special revelation, or *supernatural* gift, as in a few instances we see in the apostles and prophets, bestowed to answer a particular and temporary purpose. In such instances also, it is to be observed, the knowledge of the spirits and thoughts of men was obtained in consequence of a *revelation* made to them by Him whose prerogative it is to search the heart. In the case of our Lord, it is, however, not merely said, "And Jesus *knew their thoughts*," that he *perceived in his spirit*, that they so reasoned among themselves; but it is referred to as an *attribute* or *original faculty*, and it is, therefore made use of by St. John, on one occasion, to explain his conduct with reference to certain of his enemies:—"But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he KNEW ALL MEN, and needed not that any should testify of man, FOR HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN." After his exaltation, also, he claims the prerogative in the full style and majesty of the Jehovah of the Old Testament: "And all the Churches shall know that *I am he which* SEARCHETH THE REINS AND THE HEART."

A striking description of the omniscience of Christ is also found in Heb. iv, 12, 13, if we understand it, with most of the ancients, of the hypostatic Word; to which sense, I think the scope of the passage and context clearly determines it. "For the WORD OF GOD is quick (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a DISCERNER OF THE THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THE HEART; neither is there any creature that is not MANIFEST in his sight; for all things are NAKED and OPEN to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." The reasons for referring this passage rather to Christ, the author of the Gospel, than to the Gospel itself, are, first, that it agrees better with the apostle's argument. He is warning Christians against the example of ancient Jewish unbelief, and enforces his warning by reminding them, that th

Word of God discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. The argument is obvious, if the *personal* Word is meant; not at all so, if the doctrine of the Gospel be supposed. Secondly, the clauses, "neither is there any creature that is not manifest in HIS sight," and, all "things are naked and open to the eyes of HIM, with whom we have to do," or "*to whom we must give an account*," are undoubtedly spoken of a person, and that person our witness and judge. Those, therefore, who think that the Gospel is spoken of in verse 12, represent the apostle as making a transition from the Gospel to God himself in what follows. This, however, produces a violent break in the argument, for which no grammatical nor contextual reason whatever can be given; and it is evident that the same metaphor extends through both verses. This is taken from the practice of dividing and cutting asunder the bodies of beasts slain for sacrifice, and laying them open for inspection, lest any blemish or unsoundness should lurk within, and render them unfit for the service of God. The dividing asunder of "the joints and marrow" in the 12th verse, and the being made "naked and open to the eyes, in the 13th, are all parts of the same sacrificial and judicial *action*, to which, therefore, we can justly assign but one *agent*. The only reason given for the other interpretation is, that the term Logos is nowhere else used by St. Paul. This can weigh but little against the obvious sense of the passage. St. Luke, i, 2, appears to use the term Logos in a personal sense, and he uses it but once; and if St. Paul uses it here, and not in his other epistles, this reason may be given, that in other epistles he writes to Jews and Gentiles united in the same Churches; here, to Jews alone, among whom we have seen that the Logos was a well known theological term. (2)

The Socinians urge against this ascription of infinite knowledge to our Lord, Mark xiii, 32: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father only." The genuineness of the clause "neither the Son" has been disputed, and is not inserted by Griesbach in his text; there is not, however, sufficient reason for its rejection, though certainly in the parallel passage, Matt. xxiv, 36, "neither the Son" is not found. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only." We are then reduced to this—a number of passages explicitly declare that Christ knows all things; there is one which declares that the Son did not know "the day and the hour" of judgment; again, there is a passage which certainly implies that even this period was known to Christ; for St. Paul, 1 Tim. vi, 14, speaking of the "appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" as the universal judge, im-

(2) "Non deerat peculiaris ratio, cur Filium Dei sic vocaret, cum ad Hebræos scriberet, qui eum illo nomine indigitare solebant: ut constat ex Targum, cujus pars hoc tempore facta est, et ex Philone aliisque Hellenistis." (*Poli Synop.*)

mediately adds, "which in *his own times* καιροις ιδιοις, shall show who is the blessed and only potentate," &c. The day of judgment is here called "*his own times*," or "*his own seasons*," which, in its obvious sense, means the season he has himself fixed, since a certain manifestation of himself is in its fulness reserved by him to that period. As "the times and the seasons," also are said, in another place, to be in the Father s "own power;" so by an equivalent phrase, they are here said to be in the power of the Son, because they are "*his own times*." Doubtless, then, he knew "the day and the hour of judgment." (3) Now, certainly, no such glaring and direct contradiction can exist in the word of truth, as that our Lord should know the day of judgment, and, at the same time, and in the same sense, not know it. Either, therefore, the passage in Mark must admit of an interpretation which will make it consistent with other passages which clearly affirm our Lord's knowledge of all things, and consequently of this great day, or these passages must submit to such an interpretation as will bring them into accordance with that in Mark. It cannot, however, be in the nature of things that texts, which clearly predicate an infinite knowledge, should be interpreted to mean a finite and partial knowledge, and this attempt would only establish a contradiction between the text and the comment. Their interpretation is imperative upon us; but the text in Mark is capable of an interpretation which involves no contradiction or absurdity whatever, and which makes it accord with the rest of the Scripture testimony on this subject. This may be done two ways. The first is adopted by Macknight.

"The word οιδεν here seems to have the force of the Hebrew conjunction, *hiphil*, which in verbs denoting action, makes that action, whatever it is, pass to another. Wherefore ειδεω, which properly signifies, *I know*, used in the sense of the conjunction *hiphil*, signifies, *I make another to know, I declare*. The word has this meaning, without dispute, 1 Cor. ii, 2. 'I determined, ειδεναι, to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified;' *i. e.* I determined to make known, to preach nothing, but Jesus Christ. So, likewise, in the text, 'But of that day and that hour, none maketh you to know,' none hath power to make you know it; just as the phrase, Matt. xx, 23, 'is not mine to give,' signifies, 'is not in my power to give:'—no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father.' Neither man nor angel, nor even the Son himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you: because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed." (*Harmony.*)

The second is the usual manner of meeting the difficulty, and refers the words "neither the Son" exclusively to the human nature of our

(3) Καιροις ιδιοις, *tempore, quod ipse novit.* Erat itaque tempus adventus Christi ignotum Apostolis." (*Rosenmuller.*)

Lord, which we know, as to the body, "grew in stature," and as to the mind, in "wisdom." Bishop Kidder, in answering the Socinian objection from the lips of a Jew, observes,—

"1. That we *Christians* do believe, not only that CHRIST was GOD, but also that he was *perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting.*

"We do believe, that his *body* was like one of *ours:* a real, not a fantastic and imaginary one.

"We do also believe, that he had a human *soul*, of the same nature and kind with one of *ours;* though it was free from sin, and all original stain and corruption. And no wonder then, that we read of him, that he *increased*, not only *in stature*, and in *favour with* GOD *and man*, but *in wisdom* also: Luke ii, 52. Now *wisdom* is a spiritual endowment, and belongs to the mind or *soul*. He could not be said to *increase in wisdom* as he was GOD; nor could this be said of him with respect to his *body*, for that is not the subject of *wisdom;* but with regard to the human *soul* of CHRIST, the other part of our human nature.

"2. It must be granted, that as *man* he did not know beyond the capacities of human and finite understanding; and not what he knew as GOD. He could not be supposed to know in this respect things not knowable by *man*, any otherwise than as the Divine nature and wisdom thought fit to communicate and impart such knowledge to him.

"3. That therefore CHRIST may be said, with respect to his human nature and finite understanding, not to know the precise time, the day and hour of some future events.

"4. 'Tis farther to be considered *how* the evangelists report this matter; they do it in such terms as are very observable. *Of that day and hour knoweth no man;* it follows, *neither the Son.* He doth not say the *Son of* GOD, nor the λογος, or *Word*, but the *Son* only.

"I do not know all this while, where there is any inconsistency in the faith of *Christians;* [arising from this view;] when we believe that JESUS was *in all things made like unto us*, and in some respect a little lower than the angels, Heb. ii, 7, 17. I see no force in the above-named objection." (*Demonstration of Messiah.*)

The "Son of man," it is true, is here placed above the angels; but, as Waterland observes, "the particular concern the Son of man has in the last judgment is sufficient to account for the supposed climax or gradation.

"It is, indeed, objected by Socinians, that these interpretations of Mark xiii, 32, charge our Saviour, if not with direct falsehood, at least with criminal evasion; since he could not say with truth and sincerity, that he was ignorant of the day, if he knew it in any capacity; as it cannot be denied that man is immortal, so long as he is, in any respect, immortal. The answer to this is, that as it may truly be said of the

body of man, that it is not immortal, though the *soul* is; so it may, with equal truth, be said, that the *Son of man* was ignorant of some things, though the *Son of God* knew every thing. It is not, then, inconsistent with truth and sincerity for our Lord to deny that he knew what he really did know in one capacity, while he was ignorant of it in another. Thus, in one place he says, 'Now I am no more in the world,' John xvii, 11; and in another, 'Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always,' Matt. xxvi, 11; yet on another occasion, he says, 'Lo I am with you always,' Matt. xxviii, 20; and again, 'If any man love me—my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,' John xiv, 23. From hence we see that our Lord might, without any breach of sincerity, deny that of himself, considered in one capacity, which he could not have denied in another. There was no equivocation in his denying the knowledge of 'that day and that hour,' since, with respect to his human nature, it was most true; and that he designed it to refer alone to his human nature, is probable, because he does not say the *Son of God* was ignorant of that day, but the *Son*, meaning the *Son of man*, as appears from the context, Matthew xxiv, 37, 39; Mark xiii, 26, 34. Thus Mark xiii, 32, which, at first sight, may seem to favour the Unitarian hypothesis, is capable of a rational and unforced interpretation, consistently with the orthodox faith." (*Holden's Testimonies.*)

As the knowledge of the heart is attributed to Christ, so also is the knowledge of *futurity*, which is another quality so peculiar to Deity, that we find the true God distinguishing himself from all the false divinities of the heathen by this circumstance alone. "To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?" "I am God, and there is none like me. *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done*, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. xlvi, 5, 9, 10. All the predictions uttered by our Saviour, and which are nowhere referred by him to *inspiration*, the source to which all the prophets and apostles refer their prophetic gifts, but were spoken as from his own prescience, are in proof of his possessing this attribute. It is also affirmed, John vi, 64, that "Jesus *knew from the beginning* who they were that believed not, and who should betray him;" and again, John xiii, 11, "For Jesus *knew* who should betray him."

Thus we find the Scriptures ascribing to Jesus an existence without beginning, without change, without limitation, and connected, in the whole extent of space which it fills, with the exercise of the most perfect intelligence. These are essential attributes of Deity. "Measures of power may be communicated; degrees of wisdom and goodness may be imparted to created spirits; but our conceptions of God are confounded, and we lose sight of every circumstance by which he is cha

racterized, if such a manner of existence as we have now described be common to him and any creature." (*Hill's Lectures.*)

To these attributes may also be added OMNIPOTENCE, which is also peculiar to the Godhead; for, though power may be communicated to a creature, yet a finite capacity must limit the communication, nor can it exist infinitely, any more than wisdom, except in an infinite nature. Christ is, however, styled, Rev. i, 8, "THE ALMIGHTY." To the Jews he said, 'What things soever he [the Father] doeth, THESE ALSO DOETH THE SON LIKEWISE." Farther, he declares, that "as the Father hath LIFE IN HIMSELF, so hath he given to the Son to have LIFE IN HIMSELF," which is a most strongly marked distinction between himself and all creatures whatever. He has "life in himself," and he has it "AS the Father" has it, that is, perfectly and infinitely, which sufficiently demonstrates that he is of the same essence, or he could not have this communion of properties with the Father. The life is, indeed, said to be "*given*," but this communication from the Father makes no difference in the argument. Whether the "life" mean the same original and independent life, which at once entitles the Deity to the appellations "THE LIVING GOD," and "THE FATHER OF SPIRITS," or the bestowing of eternal life upon all believers, it amounts to the same thing. The "life" which is thus bestowed upon believers, the continuance and perfect blessedness of existence, is from Christ as its fountain, and he has it *as* the Father himself hath it. By his eternal generation it was derived from the Father to him, and he possesses it equally with the Father; by the appointment of his Father he is made the source of eternal life to believers, as having that LIFE IN HIMSELF to bestow, and to supply for ever.

We may sum up the whole Scriptural argument, from Divine attributes being ascribed by the disciples to our Saviour, and claimed by himself, with his own remarkable declaration, "ALL THINGS which the Father hath are MINE," John xvi, 15. "Here he challenges to himself the incommunicable attributes, and, consequently, that essence which is inseparable from them." (*Whitby.*) "If God the Son hath all things that the Father hath, then hath he all the attributes and perfections belonging to the Father, the same power, rights, and privileges, the same honour and glory; and, in a word, the same nature, substance, and Godhead." (*Waterland.*)

CHAPTER XIV.

The Acts ascribed to Christ Proofs of his Divinity.

This argument is in confirmation of the foregoing; for, if not only the proper names of God, his majestic and peculiar titles, and his attributes, are attributed to our Lord; but if also acts have been done by him which, in the nature of things, cannot be performed by any creature, however exalted, then he by whom they were done must be truly God.

The first act of this kind is *creation*—the creation of all things. It is not here necessary to enter into any argument to prove that creation, in its proper sense, that is, the production of things out of nothing, is possible only to *Divine* power. The Socinians themselves acknowledge this; and, therefore, employ their perverting, but feeble criticisms in a vain attempt to prove, that the creation, of which Christ, in the New Testament, is said to be the author, is to be understood of a *moral* creation, or of the *regulation* of all things in the evangelic dispensation. I shall not adduce many passages to prove that a proper creation is ascribed to our Lord; for they are sufficiently in the recollection of the reader. It is enough that two or three of them only be exhibited, which cannot be taken, without manifest absurdity, in any other sense but as attributing the whole physical creation to him.

The ascription of the creation of "all things," in the physical sense, to the Divine Word, in the introduction to St. John's Gospel, has been vindicated against the Socinian interpretation in a preceding page. I shall only farther remark upon it, first, that if St. John had intended a moral, and not a physical creation, he could not have expressed himself as he does without *intending* to mislead; a supposition equally contrary to his inspiration and to his piety. He affirms that "*all things*," and that without limitation or restriction, "were made by him;" that "without him was not *any thing* made that was made;" which clearly means, that there is no created object which had not Christ for its Creator; an assertion which contains a *revelation* of a most important and fundamental doctrine. If, however, it be taken in the Socinian sense, it is a pitiful truism, asserting that Christ did nothing in establishing his religion which he did not do: for to this effect their Version itself expresses it,—"all things were *done* by him, and without him was not any thing done that hath been done;" or, as they might have rendered it, to make the folly still more manifest, "without him was not any thing done that was done by him, or which he himself did." Unfortunately, however, for the notion of arranging or regulating the new dispensation, the apostle adds a full confirmation of his former doctrine, that the *physical* creation

was the result of the power of the Divine Word, by asserting, that "THE WORLD WAS MADE by him;" (4) that world into which he came as "*the light*," that world *in* which he was when he was made flesh; that *world* which "knew him not." It matters nothing to the argument, whether "the world" be understood of men or of the material world; on either supposition it was made by him, and the creation was, therefore, physical. In neither case could the creation be a *moral* one, for the *material* world is incapable of a moral renewal; and the world which "knew not" Christ, if understood of *men*, was not renewed but unregenerated; or he would have been "known," that is, acknowledged by them.

Another passage, equally incapable of being referred to any but a physical creation, is found in Heb. i, 2, "By whom also he MADE THE WORLDS." "God," says the apostle, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his SON, whom he hath appointed heir of all things;" and then he proceeds to give *farther* information of the nature and dignity of the personage thus denominated "SON" and "HEIR;" and his very first declaration concerning him, in this exposition of his character, in order to prove him greater than angels, who are the greatest of all created beings, is that "by him also God made the worlds." Two methods have been resorted to, in order to ward off the force of this decisive testimony as to the Deity of Christ, grounded upon his creative acts. The first is, to render the words, "FOR whom he made the worlds;" thus referring creation *immediately* to the Father, and making the preposition διὰ, with a genitive case, signify the *final cause*, the reason or end, for which "the worlds" were created. Were this even allowed, it would be a strange doctrine to assert, that FOR a mere man, FOR the exercise of the ministry of a mere man, as Christ is taken to be upon the Socinian hypothesis, "the worlds," the whole visible creation, with its various orders of intellectual beings, were created. This is a position almost as much opposed to that corrupt hypothesis as is the orthodox doctrine itself, and is another instance in proof that difficulties are multiplied, rather than lessened, by departing from the obvious sense of Scripture. But no example is found, in the whole New Testament, of the use of διὰ with a genitive to express the *final* cause; and, in the very next verse, St. Paul uses the same construction to express the *efficient* cause,—"when he had *by himself* purged our sins." "This interpretation," says Whitby, justly, "is contrary to the rule of all grammarians; contrary to the exposition of all the Greek fathers, and also without example in the New Testament."

The second resource, therefore, is to understand "the worlds," τοὺς αἰῶνας, in the literal import of the phrase, for "the ages," or the Gospel

(4) "The world was *enlightened* by him," says the New Version; which perfectly gratuitous rendering has been before adverted to.

dispensation. But "*οἱ αἰωνες*, absolutely put, doth never signify the Church, or evangelical state; nor doth the Scripture ever speak of the *world to come* in the plural, but in the singular number only." (*Whitby.*) The phrase *οἱ αἰωνες* was adopted either as equivalent to the Jewish division of the whole creation into three parts, this lower world, the region of the stars, and the third heaven, the residence of God and his angels; or as expressive of the duration of the world, extending through an idefinite number of ages, and standing opposed to the short life of its inhabitants. Αἰων primo *longum tempus*, postea *eternitatem*, apud Scriptores N. T. vero *κοσμον mundum* significat, ex Hebraismo, ubi עולם et עולמים de mundo accipitur, quia mundus post tot generationes hominum perpetuo durat. (*Rosenmuller.*) The apostle, in writing to the Hebrews, used, therefore, a mode of expression which was not only familiar to them; but which they could not but understand of the natural creation. This, however, is put out of all doubt by the use of the same phrase in the 11th chapter—"through faith we understand that the WORLDS were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear;" words which can only be understood of the physical creation. Another consideration, which takes the declaration, "by whom also he made the worlds," out of the reach of all the captious and puerile criticism on which we have remarked, is, that, in the close of the chapter, the apostle reiterates the doctrine of the creation of the world by Jesus Christ: "But unto THE SON he saith," not only, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" but, "Thou, Lord, (*Jehovah,*) in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:" words to which the perverted adroitness of heretics has been able to affix no meaning, when taken in any other sense than as addressed TO Christ, and which will for ever attach to him, on the authority of inspiration, the title of "Jehovah," and array him in all the majesty of creative power and glory. It is, indeed, a very conclusive argument in favour of the three great points of Christian doctrine, as comprehended in the orthodox faith, that it is impossible to interpret this celebrated chapter, according to any fair rule of natural and customary interpretation, without admitting that Christ is GOD, the DIVINE SON OF GOD, and the MEDIATOR. The last is indicated by his being the medium through whom, in these last days, the will of God is communicated to mankind, "God hath spoken" by him; and by his being "*anointed*" priest and king "*above his fellows.*" The second is expressed both by his title, "THE SON," and by the superiority which, in virtue of that *name*, he has above angels, and the worship which, as the SON, they are enjoined to pay to him. He is also called GOD, and this term is fixed in its highest import, by his being declared "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," and by the creative a-

which are ascribed to him; while his character of *Son*, as being OF the Father, is still preserved by the two metaphors of "*brightness*" and "*image*," and by the expression, "*God, even thy God.*" On these principles only is the apostle intelligible; on any other, the *whole* chapter is incapable of consistent exposition

The only additional passage which it is necessary to produce, in order to show that Christ is the Creator of all things, and that the creation of which he is the author, is not a moral but a physical creation; not the framing of the Christian dispensation, but the forming of the whole universe of creatures out of nothing, is Coloss. i, 15–17: "Who is the IMAGE of the invisible GOD, the FIRST BORN of every creature: for by him were all things CREATED, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created BY him, and FOR him; and he is BEFORE all things, and by him all things CONSIST." The Socinians interpret this of "that great change which was introduced into the moral world, and particularly into the relative situation of Jews and Gentiles, by the dispensation of the Gospel." (*Improved Version.*) But,

1. The apostle introduces this passage as a reason why we have "redemption through his blood;" ver. 14; why, in other words, the death of Christ was efficacious, and obviously attributes this efficacy to the dignity of his nature. This is the *scope* of his argument. 2. He, therefore, affirms him to be "*the image*" (εἰκων,) the exact representation or resemblance of the invisible God; which, when compared with Heb. i, 2, "who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," shows that the apostle uses the word in a sense in which it is not applicable to any human or angelic being,—"*the first born of every creature;*" or, more literally, "*the first born of the whole creation.*" The Arians have taken this in the sense of the *first-made creature*; but this is refuted by the term itself, which is not "first *made*," but "first *born*;" and by the following verse, which proves him to be first born, FOR, or BECAUSE (ὅτι) "by him were all things created." As to the *date* of his being, he was *before* all created things, for they were created by him: as to the *manner* of his being, he was by *generation* not *creation.* The apostle does not say, that he was *created* the first of all creatures; but, that he was *born* before them: (*Vide Wolf in loc.*)—a plain allusion to the generation of the Son before time began, and before creatures existed. Wolf has also shown, that among the Jews Jehovah is sometimes called the *primogenitum mundi*, "the first born of the world," because they attributed the creation of the world to the Logos, the Word of the Lord, the ostensible Jehovah of the Old Testament, whom certainly they never meant to include among the creatures; and that they called him also the SON OF GOD. It was, then,

in perfect accordance with the theological language of the Jews themselves, that the apostle calls our Lord "the first born of the whole creation."

The Arian interpretation, which makes the first-made creature the Creator of the rest, is thus destroyed. The Socinian notion is as manifestly absurd. If the creation here be the new dispensation, the Christian Church, then to call Christ the first born of this creation is to make the apostle say that Christ was the first-made member of the Christian Church; and the reason given for this is, that he made or constituted the Church! If by this they mean simply that he was the *author* of Christianity, we have again a puerile truism put into the lips of the apostle. If they mean that the apostle declares that Christ was the first Christian, it is difficult to conceive how this can be gravely affirmed as a comment on the words; if any thing else, it is impossible to discover any connection in the argument, that is, between the proposition that Christ is the first born of the whole creation, and the proof of it which is adduced, that by him were all things created. The annotators on the New Version say, "It is plain from comparing this passage with verse 18, (where Christ is called the first born from the dead,) that Christ is called the first born of the whole creation, because he is the first who was raised from the dead to an immortal life." This is far from being "plain;" but it is plain that, in these two verses, the apostle speaks of Christ in two different states, first, in his state "before all things," and as the sustainer of all things; and, then, in his state in "the *Church*," verse 18, in which is added to the former particulars respecting him,—that "he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead." Again, if in verses 15, 16, 17, the apostle is speaking of what Christ is *in* and *to* the Church, under the figure of a creation of all things in heaven and in earth, when he drops the figure and teaches us that Christ is the head of the Church, the first born from the dead, he uses a mere tautology; nor is there any apparent reason why he should not, in the same plain terms, have stated his proposition at once, without resorting to expressions which, in this view, would be far-fetched and delusive. In "the Church" he was "head," and "the first born from the dead," the only one who ever rose to die no more, and who gives an immortal life to those he quickens; but before the Church existed, or he himself became incarnate, "before all things," says the apostle, he was the "first born of the whole creation," that is, as the fathers understood it, he was born or begotten before every creature. But the very terms of the text are an abundant refutation of the notion, "that the creation here mentioned is not the creation of natural substances." The things created are said to be "all things in *heaven* and upon the earth;" and, lest the invisible spirits in the heaven should be thought to be excluded, the apostle adds "things

visible and things invisible;" and, lest the invisible things should be understood of *inferior* angels or spiritual beings, and the high and glorious beings, who "excel in strength," and are, in Scripture, invested with other elevated properties, should be suspected to be exceptions, the apostle becomes still more particular, and adds, whether "thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," terms by which the Jews expressed the different orders of angels, and which are used in that sense by this apostle, Ephesians i, 21. It is a shameless criticism of the authors of the New Version, and shows how hardly they were pushed by this decisive passage, that "the apostle does not here specify *things* themselves, namely, celestial and terrestrial substances, but merely *states* of things, namely, thrones, dominions, &c, which are only ranks and orders of beings in the rational and moral world." Was it, then, forgotten, that *before* St. Paul speaks of things in rank and order, he speaks of *all* things *collectively* which are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible? If so, he then, unquestionably, speaks of "*things themselves*," or he speaks of nothing. Nor is it true, that, in the enumeration of thrones, dominions, &c, he speaks of the *creation* of ranks and orders. He does not speak "merely of *states* of things, but of *things* in states; he does not say that Christ created *thrones*, and *dominions*, and *principalities*, and *powers*, which would have been more to their purpose, but that he created all things, 'whether' *ειτε*, 'they be thrones,' &c." The apostle adds, that all things were created *by* him, and FOR him, as the *end*; which could not be said of Christ, even if a moral creation were intended, since, on the Socinian hypothesis that he is a mere man, a prophet of God, he is but the instrument of restoring man to obedience and subjection, for the glory and in accomplishment of the purposes of God. But how is the whole of this description to be made applicable to a figurative creation, to the moral restoration of lapsed beings? It is as plainly *historical* as the words of Moses, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "Things visible" and "things on earth" comprise, of course, all those objects which, being neither sensible nor rational, are incapable of moral regeneration, while "things in heaven" and "things invisible" comprise the angels which never sinned and who need no repentance and no renewal. Such are those gross perversions of the word of God which this heresy induces, and with such indelible evidence is the Divinity of our Lord declared by his acts of power and glory, as the UNIVERSAL CREATOR. The admirable observations of Bishop Pearson may, properly, conclude what has been said on this important passage of inspired writ.

"In these words our Saviour is expressly styled the 'first born of every creature,' that is, begotten by God, as 'the Son of his love, antecedently to all other emanations, before any thing proceeded from him, or was framed and created by him. And that precedency is pre

sently proved by this undeniable argument, that all other emanations or productions come from him, and whatsoever received its being by creation was by him created, which assertion is delivered in the most proper, full, and frequent expressions imaginable: First, in the plain language of Moses, as most consonant to his description: 'for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth;' signifying thereby that he speaketh of the same creation. Secondly, by a division which Moses never used, as describing the production only of corporeal substances: lest, therefore, those immaterial beings might seem exempted from the Son's creation, because omitted in Moses's description, he addeth 'visible and invisible;' and lest in that invisible world, among the many degrees of celestial hierarchy, any order might seem exempted from an essential dependence on him, he nameth those which are of greatest eminence, 'whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,' and under them comprehendeth all the rest. Nor doth it yet suffice, thus to extend the object of his power, by asserting all things to be made by him, except it be so understood as to acknowledge the sovereignty of his person, and the authority of his action. For lest we should conceive the Son of God framing the world as a mere instrumental cause which worketh by and for another, he showeth him as well the final as the efficient cause; for, 'all things were created by him and for him.' Lastly, whereas all things first receive their being by creation, and when they have received it, continue in the same by virtue of God's conservation, 'in whom we live and move and have our being;' lest in any thing we should not depend immediately upon the Son of God, he is described as the conserver, as well as the Creator, for 'He is before all things, and by him all things consist.' If then we consider these two latter verses by themselves, we cannot deny but they are a most complete description of the Creator of the world; and if they were spoken of God the Father, could be no way injurious to his majesty, who is nowhere more plainly, or fully set forth unto us as the Maker of the world."

But our Lord himself professes to do other acts, beside the great act of *creating*, which are peculiar to God; and such acts are also attributed to him by his inspired apostles. His *preserving* of all things made by him has already been mentioned, and which implies not only a Divine *power*, but also *ubiquity*, since he must be present to all things, in order to their constant conservation. The final destruction of the whole frame of material nature is also as expressly attributed to him as its creation. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands; these shall perish, but thou remainest, and as a vesture SHALT THOU FOLD THEM UP, and they shall be changed." Here omnipotent power is seen "changing," and removing, and taking away the vast universe of mate-

rial things with the same ease as it was spoken into being and at first disposed into order. Generally, too, our Lord claims to perform the works of his Father. "If I do not the WORKS of my Father, believe me not; but if I DO, though ye believe not me, believe the works."—Should this, even, be restrained to the working of miracles, the argument remains the same. No prophet, no apostle, ever used such language in speaking of his miraculous gifts. Here Christ declares that he performs the works of his Father; not merely that the Father worked *by* him, but that he himself did the works of God; which can only mean works proper or peculiar to God, and which a Divine power only could effect. (5) So the Jews understood him, for, upon this declaration, "they sought again to take him." That this power of working miracles was in him an *original* power, appears also from his bestowing that power upon his disciples. "Behold I GIVE unto you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you," Luke x, 19.—"And HE GAVE them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases," Luke ix, 1. Their miracles were, therefore, to be performed in his NAME, by which the power of effecting them was expressly reserved to him. "In MY NAME shall they cast out devils;" "and HIS NAME through faith in HIS NAME hath made this man strong."

The manner in which our Lord promises the Holy Spirit is farther in proof that he performs acts peculiar to the Godhead. He speaks of "sending the Spirit" in the language of one who had an *original* right and an inherent power to bestow that wondrous gift which was to impart miraculous energies, and heavenly wisdom, comfort, and purity to human minds. Does the Father *send* the Spirit? He claims the same power,—"the Comforter, whom *I will send* unto you." The Spirit is, on this account, called "the Spirit of Christ," and "the Spirit of God." Thus the giving of the Spirit is indifferently ascribed to the Son and to the Father; but when that gift is *mediately* bestowed by the apostles, no such language is assumed by them: they pray to Christ, and to the Father in his name, and he, their exalted Master, *sheds forth* the blessing—"therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Another of the unquestionably peculiar acts of God, is the forgiveness of sins. In the manifest reason of the thing, no one can forgive but the party offended; and as sin is the transgression of the law of God, he, alone, is the offended party, and he only, therefore, can forgive.—

(5) "Si non facio ea ipsa divina opera, quæ pater meus facit; si quæ facio, non habent divinæ virtutis specimen." (*Rosenmuller.*) "*Opera Patris mei.* i. e. quæ Patri, sive Deo, sunt propria: quæ a nemine alio fieri queunt." (*Pott Synop.*)

Mediately, others may *declare* his pardoning acts, or the conditions on which he determines to forgive; but, authoritatively, there can be no actual forgiveness of sins against God but by God himself. But Christ forgives sin authoritatively, and he is, therefore, God. One passage is all that is necessary to prove this. "He said to the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, *thy sins be forgiven thee.*" The scribes, who were present, understood that he did this *authoritatively*, and assumed, in this case, the rights of Divinity. They therefore said, among themselves, "This man blasphemeth." What then is the conduct of our Lord? Does he admit that he only ministerially *declared*, in consequence of some revelation, that God had forgiven the sins of the paralytic? On the contrary, he works a miracle to prove to them, that the very right which they disputed was vested in him, that he had this authority—"but that ye may KNOW that the Son of man hath POWER on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine own house."

Such were the acts performed by our Saviour, in the days of his sojourn on earth, and which he is represented, by his inspired apostles, to be still constantly performing, or as having the power to perform.—If any creature is capable of doing the same mighty works, then is all distinction between created, finite natures, and the uncreated Infinite destroyed. If such a distinction, in fact, exists; if neither creation, preservation, nor salvation be possible to a mere creature, we have seen that they are possible to Christ, because he actually creates, preserves, and saves; and the inevitable conclusion is, THAT HE IS VERY GOD.

CHAPTER XV.

DIVINE WORSHIP PAID TO CHRIST.

FROM Christ's own acts we may pass to those of his disciples and particularly to one which unequivocally marks their opinion respecting his Divinity: they WORSHIP him as a Divine person, and they enjoin this also upon Christians to the end of time. If Christ, therefore, is not God, the apostles were idolaters, and Christianity is a system of impiety. This is a point so important as to demand a close investigation.

The *fact* that Divine worship was paid to Christ by his disciples must be first established. Instances of falling down at the feet of Jesus and worshipping him are so frequent in the Gospel, that it is not necessary to select the instances which are so familiar; and though we allow that the word προσκυνειν is sometimes used to express that lowly reverence with which, in the east, it has been always customary to salute

persons considered as greatly superior, and especially rulers and sovereigns, it is yet the same word which, in a great number of instances, is used to express the worship of the supreme GOD. We are, then, to collect the intention of the act of worship, whether designed as a token of profound civil respect, or of real and Divine adoration, from the circumstances of the instances on record. When a leper comes and "WORSHIPS" Christ, professing to believe that he had the power of healing diseases, and that in himself, which power he could exercise at his will, all which he expresses by saying, "Lord, if thou WILT, thou CANST make me clean," we see a Jew retaining that faith of the Jewish Church in its purity, which had been corrupted among so many of his nation, that the Messiah was to be a Divine person; and, viewing our Lord under that character, he regarded his miraculous powers as original and personal, and so hesitated not to worship him. Here then, is a case in which the circumstances clearly show that the worship was religious and supreme. When the man who had been cured of blindness by Jesus, and who had defended his *prophetic* character before the council, before he knew that he had a higher character than that of a *prophet*, was met in private by Jesus, and instructed in the additional fact, that he was "THE SON OF GOD," he worshipped him. "Jesus heard, that they had cast him out, and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe, and he WORSHIPPED him:"—worshipped him, be it observed, under his character, "Son of God," a title which, we have already seen, was regarded by the Jews as implying actual Divinity, and which the man understood to raise Jesus far above the rank of a mere prophet. The worship paid by this man must, therefore, in its intention, have been supreme, for it was offered to an acknowledged Divine person, the Son of God. When the disciples, fully yielding to the demonstration of our Lord's Messiahship, arising out of a series of splendid miracles, recognized him *also* under his personal character, "they came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of GOD!" Matt. xiv, 33. When Peter, upon the miraculous draught of fishes, "fell at his feet," and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," these expressions themselves mark as strongly the awe and apprehension which is produced in the breast of a sinful man, when he feels himself in the presence of Divinity itself, as when Isaiah exclaims, in his vision of the Divine glory, "Wo is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell among a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

The circumstances then, which accompany these instances make it evident, that the *worship* here paid to our Lord was of the highest

order; and they will serve to explain several other cases in the Gospels, similar in the act, though not accompanied with illustrative circumstances so explicit. But there is one general consideration of importance which applies to them all. Such acts of lowly prostration as are called *worship* were chiefly paid to civil governors. Now our Lord carefully avoided giving the least sanction to the notion that he had any civil pretensions, and that his object was to make himself king. It would, therefore, have been a marked inconsistency to suffer himself to be saluted with the homage and prostration proper to civil governors, and which, indeed, was not always in Judea, rendered to them. He did not receive this homage, then, under the character of a civil ruler or sovereign; and under what character could he receive it? Not in compliance with the haughty custom of the Jewish rabbis, who exacted great external reverence from their disciples, for he sharply reproved their haughtiness and love of adulation and honour: not as a simple teacher of religion, for his apostles might then have imitated his example, since, upon the Socinian hypothesis of his mere manhood, they, when they had collected disciples and founded Churches, had as clear a right to this distinction as he himself, had it only been one of appropriate and common courtesy sanctioned by their master. But when do we read of their receiving worship without spurning it on the very ground that "they were MEN of like passions" with others? How, then, is it to be accounted for, that our Lord never forbade or discouraged this practice as to himself, or even shunned it? In no other way than that he was conscious of his natural right to the homage thus paid; and that he accepted it as the expression of a *faith* which, though sometimes wavering, because of the obscurity which darkened the minds of his followers, and which even his own conduct, mysterious as it necessarily was, till "he openly showed himself" after his passion, tended to produce, yet sometimes pierced through the cloud, and saw and acknowledged, in the Word made flesh, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

But to proceed with instances of worship subsequent to our Lord's resurrection and ascension: "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, and they WORSHIPPED him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy," Luke xxiv, 51, 52. Here the act must necessarily have been one of Divine adoration, since it was performed *after* "he was parted from them," and cannot be resolved into the customary token of *personal* respect paid to superiors. This was always done in the *presence* of the superior; never by the Jews in his absence.

When the apostles were assembled to fill up the place of Judas the lots being prepared, they pray, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these men thou hast chosen." That this prayer is addressed to Christ is clear, from its being his special prer-

gative to choose his own disciples, who, therefore, styled themselves "apostles," not of the Father, but "of Jesus Christ." Here, then, is a direct act of worship, because an act of prayer; and our Lord is addressed as he who "knows the hearts of all men." Nor is this more than he himself claims in the Revelation, "And all the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart."

When Stephen, the protomartyr, was stoned, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles records two instances of prayer offered to our Lord by this man "full of the Holy Ghost," and therefore, according to this declaration, under plenary inspiration. "LORD JESUS! RECEIVE MY SPIRIT!" "LORD, LAY NOT THIS SIN TO THEIR CHARGE!" In the former he acknowledges Christ to be the disposer of the eternal states of men: in the latter, he acknowledges him to be the governor and judge of men, having power to remit, pass by, or visit their sins. All these are manifestly Divine acts, which sufficiently show, that St. Stephen addressed his prayers to Christ as GOD. The note from Lindsay, inserted in the Socinian version, shows the manner in which the Socinians attempt to evade this instance of direct prayer being offered by the apostles to Christ. "This address of Stephen to Jesus, when he actually saw him, does not authorize us to offer prayers to him now he is *invisible*." And this is seriously alleged! How does the circumstance of an object of prayer and religious worship being seen or unseen alter the case? May a man, when seen, be an object of prayer, to whom, unseen, it would be unlawful to pray? The papists, if this were true, would find a new refutation of their practice of invocating *dead* saints furnished by the Socinians. Were they alive and *seen*, prayer to them would be lawful; but now they are invisible, it is idolatry! Even *image* worship would derive, from this casuistry, a sort of apology, as the *seen* image is, at least, the visible representation of the invisible saint or angel. But let the case be put fairly: suppose a dying person to pray to a *man*, visible and near his bed, "Lord, receive my spirit: Lord, lay not sin to the charge of my enemies," who sees not that this would be gross idolatry? And yet if Jesus be a mere man, the idolatry is the same, though that man be in heaven. It will not alter the case, for the Socinian to say that the man Jesus is exalted to great dignity and rule in the invisible world; for he is, after all, on their showing, but a servant; not a dispenser of the eternal states of men, not an avenger or a passer by of sin, in his own right, that he should lay sin to the charge of any one, or not lay it, as he might be desired to do by a disciple; and if St. Stephen had these views of him, he would not, surely, have asked of a *servant*, what a servant had no power to grant. Indeed, the Socinians themselves give up the point, by denying that Christ is lawfully the object of prayer. There, however, he is prayed to, beyond all controversy, and his right and power to dispose of the disembodied spirits of

men is as much recognized in the invocation of the dying Stephen, as the same right and power in the Father, in the last prayer of our Lord himself: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

To Dr. Priestley's objection, that this is an inconsiderable instance, and is to be regarded as a mere ejaculation, Bishop Horsley forcibly replies: "St. Stephen's short ejaculatory address you had not forgotten; but you say it is very inconsiderable. But, sir, why is it inconsiderable? Is it because it was only an ejaculation? Ejaculations are often prayers of the most fervid kind; the most expressive of self abasement and adoration. Is it for its brevity that it is inconsiderable? What, then, is the precise length of words which is requisite to make a prayer an act of worship? Was this petition preferred on an occasion of distress, on which a Divinity might be naturally invoked? Was it a petition for a succour which none but a Divinity could grant? If this was the case, it was surely an act of worship. Is the situation of the worshipper the circumstance which, in your judgment, sir, lessens the authority of his example? You suppose, perhaps, some consternation of his faculties, arising from distress and fear. The history justifies no such supposition. It describes the utterance of the final prayer, as a deliberate act of one who knew his situation, and possessed his understanding. After praying for himself, he kneels down to pray for his persecutors: and such was the composure with which he died, although the manner of his death was the most tumultuous and terrifying, that as if he had expired quietly upon his bed, the sacred historian says, that 'he fell asleep.' If, therefore, you would insinuate, that St. Stephen was not himself, when he sent forth this 'short ejaculatory address to Christ,' the history refutes you. If he was himself, you cannot justify his prayer to Christ, while you deny that Christ is God, upon any principle that might not equally justify you or me, in praying to the blessed Stephen. If St. Stephen, in the full possession of his faculties, prayed to him who is no God, why do we reproach the Romanist, when he chaunts the litany of his saints?"

St. Paul, also, in that affliction, which he metaphorically describes by "a thorn in the flesh," "sought the Lord thrice" that it might depart from him; and the answer shows that "the LORD," to whom he addressed his prayer, was CHRIST; for he adds, "and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness: most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the POWER OF CHRIST may rest upon me;" clearly signifying the power of him who had said, in answer to his *prayer*, "My strength, δυναμις, *power*, is made perfect in weakness."

St. Paul also prays to Christ, conjointly with the Father, in behalf of the Thessalonians. "Now our LORD JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting

consolation, and good hope through grace, *comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good work*," 2 Thess. ii, 16, 17. In like manner he invokes our Lord to grant his spiritual presence to Timothy: "The Lord Jesus be with thy spirit," 2 Tim. iv, 22. The invoking of Christ is, indeed, adduced by St. Paul as a distinctive characteristic of Christians, so that among all the primitive Churches this practice must have been universal. "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that IN EVERY PLACE CALL UPON THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST our Lord, both theirs and ours," 1 Cor. i, 2. "It appears, from the expression here and elsewhere used, that to *invocate the name* of our Lord Jesus Christ was a practice characterizing and distinguishing Christians from infidels." (*Dr. Benson.*) Thus St. Paul is said, before his conversion, to have had "authority from the chief priests to bind all THAT CALL UPON THY NAME." The Socinian criticism is, that the phrase επικαλεισθαι το ονομα may be translated either "to call on the name," or be called by the name; and they, therefore, render 1 Cor. i, 2, "all that are called *by the name* of Jesus Christ." If, however, all that can be said in favour of this rendering is, that the verb *may* be rendered *passively*, how is it that they choose to render it actively in all places, except where their system is to be served? This itself is suspicious. But it is not necessary to produce the refutations of this criticism given by several of their learned opponents, who have shown that the verb, followed by an *accusative* case, *usually*, if not constantly, is used, in its active signification, *to call upon, to invoke.* One passage is sufficient to prove both the active signification of the phrase, when thus applied, and also that to call upon the name of Christ is an act of the highest worship. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Rom. x, 13. This is quoted from the Prophet Joel. St. Peter, in his sermon on the day of pentecost, makes use of it as a prophecy of Christ, and the argument of St. Paul imperatively requires us also to understand it of him. Now this prophecy proves that the phrase in question is used for invocation, since it is not true that whosoever *shall be called by the name* of the Lord will be saved, but those only who rightly *call upon it*; it proves also that the calling upon the name of the Lord, here mentioned, is a *religious* act, for it is calling upon the name of JEHOVAH, the word used by the Prophet Joel, the consequence of which act of faith and worship is *salvation.* "This text, indeed, presents us with a double argument in favour of our Lord's Divinity. First, it applies to him what, by the Prophet Joel, is spoken of Jehovah; secondly, it affirms him to be the object of religious adoration. Either of these particulars does, indeed, imply the other; for if he be Jehovah, he must be the object of religious adoration; and if he be the object of religious adoration, he must be Jehovah." (*Bishop Horne.*)

In the Revelation, too, we find St. John worshipping Christ, "falling at his feet as one dead." St. Paul also declares "that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE shall bow," which, in Scripture language, signifies an act of religious worship. "For this cause I *bow my knees* to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But this homage and adoration of Christ is not confined to men; it is practised among heavenly beings. "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." For the purpose of evading the force of these words, the Socinians, in their version, have chosen the absurdity of rendering αγγελοι throughout this chapter, by "*messengers*," but in the next chapter, as though the subject would, by that time, be out of the reader's mind, they return to the common version, "angels." Thus they make the "spirits and flames of fire," or, as they render it, "winds and flames of lightning," to be the ancient prophets or *messengers*, not angels; and of these same prophets and *messengers*, who lived several thousand years ago, their translation affirms that they "are sent forth to minister for them who *shall be* (*in future!*) heirs of salvation." The absurdity is so apparent, that it is scarcely necessary to add, that, in the New Testament, though "angel" is sometimes applied to men, yet "angels of God" is a phrase never used, but to express an order of *heavenly* intelligences.

If, however, either *prophets* or *angels* were commanded to worship Christ, his Divinity would be equally proved, and, therefore, the note on this text, in the New Version teaches, that "to worship Christ" here means to acknowledge him as their superior; and urges that the text is cited from the LXX, Deut. xxxii, 43, "where it is spoken of the Hebrew nation, and, therefore, cannot be understood of religious worship." But whoever will turn to the LXX, will see that it is not the Hebrew nation, but Jehovah, who is exhibited in that passage as the object of worship; and if, therefore, the text were cited from the book of Deuteronomy, and the genuineness of the passage in the LXX were allowed, for it is not in the present Hebrew text, it would only afford another proof, that, in the mind of the apostles, the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New are the same being, and that equal worship is due to both. We have, however, an unquestioned text in the Old Testament, Psalm xcvii, 7, from which the quotation is obviously made; where, in the Hebrew, it is "worship him, all ye gods," a probable ellipsis for "the angels of the Aleim;" for the LXX uses the word "angels." This psalm the apostle, therefore, understood of Christ, and in this the old Jewish interpreters agree with him; (6) and though he is not mentioned in it by any of his usual Old Testament titles, except that of Jehovah, it

(6) "Psalmos omnes a XCIII ad CI in se continere mysterium Messiæ, dixit David Kimshi." (*Rosenmuller.*)

clearly predicts the overthrow of idolatry by the introduction of the kingdom of this Jehovah. It follows then, that as idolatry was not overthrown by Judaism, but by the kingdom of Christ, it is Christ, as the head and author of this kingdom, of whom the psalmist speaks, and whom he sees receiving the worship of the angels of God upon its introduction and establishment. This, also, agrees with the words by which the apostle introduces the quotation. "And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the *world*," the habitable world; which intimates that it was upon some solemn occasion, when engaged in some solemn act, that the angels were commanded to worship him, and this act is represented in the ninety-seventh Psalm as the establishment of his kingdom. Bishop Horsley's remarks on this psalm are equally just and beautiful.

"That Jehovah's kingdom in some sense or other is the subject of this Divine song, cannot be made a question, for thus it opens,—'Jehovah reigneth.' The psalm, therefore, must be understood, either of God's natural kingdom over his whole creation; of his particular kingdom over the Jews, his chosen people; or of that kingdom which is called in the New Testament the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ. For of any other kingdom beside these three, man never heard or read. God's peculiar kingdom over the Jews cannot be the subject of this psalm, because *all nations* of the earth are called upon to rejoice in the acknowledgment of this great truth, 'Jehovah reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the many isles be glad thereof.' The many isles are the various regions of the habitable world.

"The same consideration, that Jehovah's kingdom is mentioned as a subject of general thanksgiving, proves that God's universal dominion over his whole creation cannot be the kingdom in the prophet's mind. For in this kingdom a great majority of the ancient world, the idolaters, were considered, not as subjects who might rejoice in the glory of their monarch; but as rebels who had every thing to fear from his just resentment.

"It remains, therefore, that Christ's kingdom is that kingdom of Jehovah which the inspired poet celebrates as the occasion of universal joy. And this will farther appear by the sequel of the song. After four verses, in which the transcendent glory, the irresistible power, and inscrutable perfection of the Lord, who to the joy of all nations reigneth, are painted in poetical images, taken partly from the awful scene on Sinai which accompanied the delivery of the law, partly from other manifestations of God's presence with the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, he proceeds, in the sixth verse, 'The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.' We read in the 19th Psalm, that 'the heavens declare the glory of God.' And the glory of God, the power and the intelligence of the Creator, is indeed visibly declared in the fabric of the material world. But I cannot see how the

structure of the heavens can demonstrate the *righteousness* of God. Wisdom and power may be displayed in the contrivance of an inanimate machine; but righteousness cannot appear in the arrangement of the parts, or the direction of the motions of lifeless matter. The heavens therefore, in their external structure, cannot declare their Maker's righteousness. But the heavens, in another sense, attested the righteousness of Christ when the voice from heaven declared him the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father was well pleased; and when the preternatural darkness of the sun at the crucifixion, and other agonies of nature, drew that confession from the heathen centurion who attended the execution, that the suffering Jesus was the Son of God; 'And all the people see his glory.' The word *people*, in the singular, for the most part denotes God's chosen people, the Jewish nation, unless any other particular people happen to be the subject of discourse. But *peoples*, in the plural, is put for all the other races of mankind as distinct from the chosen people. The word here is in the plural form, 'And all the peoples see his glory.' But when, or in what did any of the peoples, the idolatrous nations, see the glory of God? Literally they never saw his glory. The effulgence of the Shechinah never was displayed to them, except when it blazed forth upon the Egyptians to strike them with a panic; or when the towering pillar of flame, which marshalled the Israelites in the wilderness, was seen by the inhabitants of Palestine and Arabia as a threatening meteor in their sky. Intellectually no idolaters ever saw the glory of God, for they never acknowledged his power and Godhead: had they thus seen his glory, they had ceased to be idolaters. But all the *peoples*, by the preaching of the Gospel, saw the glory of Christ. They saw it literally in the miracles performed by his apostles; they saw it spiritually when they perceived the purity of his precepts, when they acknowledged the truth of his doctrine, when they embraced the profession of Christianity, and owned Christ for their Saviour and their God. The psalmist goes on, 'Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols. Worship him, all ye gods.' In the original this verse has not at all the form of a malediction, which it has acquired in our translation from the use of the strong word *confounded*. '*Let them be ashamed.*' This is the utmost that the psalmist says. The prayer that they may be ashamed of their folly and repent of it, is very different from an imprecation of confusion. But in truth the psalmist rather seems to speak prophetically, without any thing either of prayer or imprecation —'they shall be ashamed.' Having seen the glory of Christ they shall be ashamed of the idols, which in the times of ignorance they worshipped. In the 8th and 9th verses, looking forward to the times when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in, and the remnant of Israel shall turn to the Lord, he describes the daughter of Judah as rejoicing at the news of the mercy extended to the Gentile world, and exulting in the univer

sal extent of Jehovah's kingdom, and the general acknowledgment of his Godhead." (*Nine Sermons.*)

The argument of the apostle is thus made clear; he proves Christ superior to angels, and therefore Divine. because angels themselves are commanded "to *worship* him." (7) Nor is this the only prophetic psalm in which the religious worship of Messiah is predicted. The 72d Psalm, alone, is full of this doctrine. "They shall FEAR thee as long as the sun and moon endure." "All kings shall WORSHIP (or, FALL DOWN) before him; all nations shall SERVE him." "PRAYER shall be made ever for (or, to) him, and daily shall he be PRAISED."

Finally, as to the direct worship of Christ, the book of Revelation, in its scenic representations, exhibits him as, equally with the Father, the object of the worship of angels and of glorified saints; and, in chapter eighth, places every creature in the universe, the inhabitants of hell only excepted, in prostrate adoration at his footstool. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, AND UNTO THE LAMB for ever and ever."

To these instances are to be added, all the DOXOLOGIES to Christ, in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and all the BENEDICTIONS made in his *name* in common with theirs; for all these are forms of worship. The first consist of ascriptions of equal and Divine honours, with grateful recognitions of the Being addressed, as the author of benefits received; the second are a solemn blessing of others in the name of God, and were derived from the practice of the Jewish priests and the still older patriarchs, who blessed others in the name of Jehovah, as his representatives.

Of the first, the following may be given as a few out of many instances: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom be GLORY for ever and ever," 2 Tim. iv, 18 "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: to him be GLORY both now and for ever. Amen," 2 Pet. iii, 18. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be GLORY and DOMINION for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. i, 5, 6. "When we consider the great difference between these doxologies and the commendations but sparingly given in the Scriptures to mere men; the serious and reverential manner in which they are introduced; and the superlative praise they convey, so far surpassing what humanity can deserve, we cannot but suppose that the Being to whom they refer is really Divine. The ascription of eternal glory and

(7) "Ceterum recte argumentatur apostolus: si angeli Regem illum maximum adorare debent; ergo sunt illo inferiores." (*Rosenmuller in loc.*)

everlasting dominion, if addressed to any creature, however exalted, would be idolatrous and profane." (*Holden's Testimonies.*) Of benedictions the commencement and conclusion of several of the epistles furnish instances, so regular in their form, as to make it clearly appear, that the apostles and the priests of the New Testament constantly *blessed* the people *ministerially* in the name of Christ, as one of the blessed trinity. This consideration alone shows that the benedictions are not, as the Socinians would take them, to be considered as cursory expressions of good will. "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." This, with little variation, is the common form of salutation; and the usual parting benediction is, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all;" or, more fully, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." In answer to the Socinian perversion, that these are mere "wishes," it has been well and wisely observed, that "this objection overlooks or notices very slightly, the point on which the whole question turns, the *nature* of the blessings sought, and the *qualities* which they imply in the Person as whose donation they are deliberately desired. These blessings are not of that kind which one creature is competent to bestow upon another. They refer to the judicial state of an accountable being before God, to the remission of moral offences, to the production and preservation of certain mental qualities which none can efficaciously and immediately give but He who holds the dominion of human minds and feelings, and to the enjoyments of supreme and endless felicity. They are *grace*, *mercy*, and *peace*. *Grace*, the free favour of the Eternal Majesty to those who have forfeited every claim to it, such favour as in its own nature and in the contemplation of the supplicant, is the sole and effective cause of deliverance from the greatest evils, and acquisition of the greatest good. *Mercy*, the compassion of infinite goodness, conferring its richest bestowments of holiness and happiness on the ruined, miserable, and helpless. *Peace*, the tranquil and delightful feeling which results from the rational hope of possessing these enjoyments. These are the highest blessings that Omnipotent Benevolence can give, or a dependent nature receive. To *desire such* blessings, either in the mode of direct address or in that of precatory wish, from any being who is not possessed of omnipotent goodness, would be, not 'innocent and proper,' but sinful and absurd in the highest degree. When, therefore, we find every apostle whose epistles are extant, pouring out his 'expressions of desire,' with the utmost simplicity and energy, for *these* blessings, as proceeding from 'our Lord Jesus Christ,' equally with 'God our Father,' we cannot but regard it as the just and necessary conclusion that Christ and the Father are *one* in the perfection which originates the highest blessings, and in the honour due for the gift of those blessings." (*Smith's Person of Christ.*)

So clearly does the New Testament show that supreme worship was paid to Christ, as well as to the Father; and the practice obtained as a matter of course, as a matter quite undisputed in the primitive Church, and has so continued, in all orthodox Churches, to this day. Thus heathen writers represented the first Christians as worshippers of Christ; and, as for the practice of the primitive Church, it is not necessary to quote passages from the fathers, which are so well known, or so easily found in all books which treat on this subject. It is sufficient evidence of the practice, that when, in the fourth century, the Arians taught, that our Lord was a super angelic *creature* only, they departed not, in the instance of worship, from the homage paid to him in the universal Church; but continued to adore Christ. On this ground the orthodox justly branded them with idolatry; and, in order to avoid the force of the charge, they invented those sophistical distinctions as to superior and inferior worship which the papists, in later times, introduced, in order to excuse the worship of saints and angels. Even the old Socinians allowed Christ to be the object of religious adoration; so impossible was it, even for them, to oppose themselves all at once to the reproving and condemning universal example of the Church of Christ in all ages.

Having, then, established the fact of the worship of Christ by his immediate followers, whose precepts and example have, in this matter, been followed by all the faithful; let us consider the religious principles which the first disciples held, in order to determine whether they could have so worshipped Christ, unless his true Divinity had been, with them, a fundamental and universally received doctrine. They were Jews; and Jews of an age in which their nation had long shaken off its idolatrous propensities, and which was distinguished by its zeal against all worship, or expressions of religious trust and hope being directed, not only to false gods, (to idols,) but to creatures. The great principle of the law was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before (or, beside) me." It was, therefore, commanded by Moses, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve;" which words are quoted by our Lord in his temptation, when solicited to worship Satan, so as to prove that to *fear* God and to *serve* him are expressions which signify *worship*, and that all other beings but God are excluded from it. "Thou shalt WORSHIP the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The argument, too, in the quotation, is not that Satan had no right to receive worship because he was an evil spirit; but that, whatever he might be, or whoever should make that claim, God only is to be worshipped. By this, also, we see that Christianity made no alteration in Judaism, as to the article of doctrine, for our Lord himself here adopts it as his own principle; he quotes it from the writings of Moses, and so transmitted it, on his own authority, to his followers. Accordingly, we find the

apostles teaching and practising this as a first principle of their religion. St. Paul, Rom. i, 21–25, charges the heathen with not *glorifying* God when they *knew* him, and worshipping and serving "the *creature* more than (or, beside) the Creator, who is blessed for ever." "Wherein the apostle," says Waterland, "plainly intimates, that the Creator only is to be served, and that the idolatry of the heathens lay in their worshipping of the *creature*. He does not blame them for giving *sovereign* or *absolute* worship to creatures; they could scarcely be so silly as to imagine there could be more than one supreme God; but for giving any worship to them at all, sovereign or inferior." (*Defence of Queries.*) Again: when he mentions it as one of the crimes of the Galatians, previous to their conversion to Christianity, that they "did SERVICE unto them which by *nature* were no gods," he plainly intimates, that no one has a title to religious *service* but he who is by *nature* God; and, if so, he himself could not worship or do service to Christ, unless he believed him to possess a *natural* and *essential* Divinity.

The practice of the apostles, too, was in strict accordance with this principle. Thus, when worship was offered to St. Peter, by Cornelius, who certainly did not take him to be God, he forbade it: so also Paul and Barnabas forbade it at Lystra, with expressions of horror, when offered to them. An eminent instance is recorded, also, of the exclusion of all creatures, however exalted, from this honour, in Rev. xix, 10, where the angel refuses to receive so much as the outward act of adoration, giving this rule and maxim upon it, "*Worship* GOD;" intimating thereby, that God only is to be worshipped; that all acts of religious worship are appropriated to God alone. He does not say, "Worship God, and whom God shall appoint to be worshipped," as if he had appointed any beside God; nor "Worship God with sovereign worship," as if any inferior sort of worship was permitted to be paid to creatures; but simply, plainly, and briefly, "*Worship* GOD."

From the known and avowed religious sentiments, then, of the apostles, both as Jews and as Christians, as well as from their practice, it follows that they could not pay religious worship to Christ, a fact which has already been established, except they had considered him as a Divine person, and themselves as bound, on that account, according to his own words, to *honour the Son, even as they honoured the Father.*

The Arians, it is true, as hinted above, devised the doctrine of supreme and inferior worship, and a similar distinction was maintained by Dr. Samuel Clarke, to reconcile the worship of Christ with his semi-Arianism. The same sophistical distinctions are resorted to by Roman Catholics to vindicate the worship of angels, the Virgin Mary, and departed saints. This distinction they express by λατρεια and δουλεια. St. Paul, however, and other sacred writers, and the early fathers, cer-

tainly use these terms promiscuously and indifferently, so that the argument which is founded upon them, in defence of this inferior and subordinate worship, falls to the ground; and, as to all these distinctions of worship into ultimate or supreme, mediate or inferior, Dr. Waterland has most forcibly observed,—

1. "I can meet with nothing in Scripture to countenance those fine-spun notions. Prayer we often read of; but there is not a syllable about absolute and relative, supreme and inferior prayer. We are commanded to pray fervently and incessantly; but never sovereignly or absolutely that I know of. We have no rules left us about raising or lowering our intentions, in proportion to the dignity of the objects. Some instructions to this purpose might have been highly useful; and it is very strange that, in a matter of so great importance, no directions should be given, either in Scripture, or, at least, in antiquity, how to regulate our intentions and meanings, with metaphysical exactness; so as to make our worship either high, higher, or highest of all, as occasion should require.

2. "But a greater objection against this doctrine is, that the whole tenor of Scripture runs counter to it. This may be understood, in part, from what I have observed above. To make it yet plainer, I shall take into consideration such acts and instances of worship, as I find laid down in Scripture, whether under the old or new dispensation.

"Sacrifice was one instance of worship required under the law; and it is said, 'He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed,' Exod. xxii, 20. Now suppose any person, considering with himself that only absolute and sovereign sacrifice was appropriated to God, by this law, should have gone and sacrificed to other gods, and have been convicted of it before the judges:—the apology he must have made for it, I suppose, must have run thus: 'Gentlemen, though I have sacrificed to other gods, yet, I hope, you 'll observe, that I did it not absolutely: I meant not any absolute or supreme sacrifice, (which is all that the law forbids,) but relative and inferior only. I regulated my intentions with all imaginable care, and my esteem with the most critical exactness: I considered the other gods, whom I sacrificed to, as inferior only, and infinitely so; reserving all sovereign sacrifice to the supreme God of Israel.' This, or the like apology, must, I presume, have brought off the criminal, with some applause for his acuteness, if your principles be true. Either you must allow this; or you must be content to say, that not only absolute supreme sacrifice, (if there be any sense in that phrase,) but all sacrifice was, by the law, appropriated to God only.

"Another instance of worship is, making of vows, religious vows. We find as little appearance of your famed distinction here, as in the former case. We read nothing of sovereign and inferior, absolute and

relative vows; that we should imagine supreme vows to be appropriate to God, inferior permitted to angels or idols, or to any creature.

"Swearing is another instance much of the same kind with the foregoing. Swearing by God's name is a plain thing, and well understood: but if you tell us of sovereign and inferior swearing, according to the inward respect or intention you have, in proportion to the dignity of the person by whose name you swear, it must sound perfectly new to us. All swearing which comes short in its respects, or falls below sovereign, will, I am afraid, be little better than profaneness.

"Such being the case in respect of the acts of religious worship already mentioned, I am now to ask you, what is there so peculiar in the case of invocation and adoration, that they should not be thought of the same kind with the other? Why should not absolute and relative prayer and prostration appear as absurd as absolute and relative sacrifice, vows oaths, or the like? They are acts and instances of religious worship, like the other; appropriated to God in the same manner, and by the same laws, and upon the same grounds and reasons. Well then, will you please to consider whether you have not begun at the wrong end, and committed an υστερον προτερον in your way of thinking. You imagine that acts of religious worship are to derive their signification and quality from the intention and meaning of the worshippers; whereas the very reverse of it is the truth. Their meaning and signification is fixed and determined by God himself; and therefore we are never to use them with any other meaning, under peril of profaneness or idolatry. God has not left us at liberty to fix what sense we please upon religious worship, to render it high or low, absolute or relative, at discretion, supreme when offered to God, and if to others inferior: as when to angels, or saints, or images, in suitable proportion. No: religion was not made for metaphysical heads only; such as might nicely distinguish the several degrees and elevations of respect and honour among many objects. The short and plain way, which (in pity to human infirmity, and to prevent confusion,) it has pleased God to take with us, is to make all religious worship his own; and so it is sovereign of course. This I take to be the true Scriptural, as well as only reasonable account of the object of worship. We need not concern ourselves (it is but vain to pretend to it) about determining the sense and meaning of religious worship. God himself has taken care of it; and it is already fixed and determined to our hands. It means, whether we will or no, it means, by Divine institution and appointment, the divinity, the supremacy, the sovereignty of its object. To misapply those marks of dignity, those appropriate ensigns of Divine majesty; to compliment any creature with them, and thereby to make common what God has made proper, is to deify the works of God's hands, and to serve the creature instead of the Creator, God blessed for ever. We have no occasion to talk of

sovereign, absolute prayers, and such other odd fancies: prayer is an address to God, and does not admit of those novel distinctions. In short then, here is no room left for your distinguishing between sovereign and inferior adoration. You must first prove, what you have hitherto presumed only, and taken for granted, that you are at liberty to fix what meaning and signification you please to the acts of religious worship, to make them high or low at discretion. This you will find a very difficult undertaking. Scripture is beforehand with you; and, to fix it more, the concurring judgment of the earliest and best Christian writers. All religious worship is hereby determined to be what you call absolute and sovereign. Inferior or relative worship appears now to be contradiction in sense, as it is novel in sound; like an inferior or relative god." (*Defence of Queries.*)

These absurdities have, at length, been discovered by Socinians themselves, who, notwithstanding the authority of Socinus, have, at length, become, in this respect, consistent; and, as they deny the Divinity of our Lord, so they refuse him worship, and do NOT "honour the Son as they honour the Father." Their refusal to do so must be left to him who hath said, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way;" but, though they have not shunned error, they have, at least, by refusing all worship to Christ, escaped from hypocrisy

Numerous other passages in the New Testament, in addition to those on which some remarks have been offered, might be adduced, in which the Divinity of our Lord is expressly taught, and which might be easily rescued from that discreditable and unscholarly criticism, by which Socinian writers have attempted to darken their evidence. It has, however, been my object rather to adduce passages which directly support the arguments in the order in which they have been adduced, than to collect those which are more insulated. All of them ought, however, to be consulted by the careful student; and, indeed, from many texts of this description, which appear to be but incidentally introduced, the evidence that the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ was taught by the apostles, is presented to us with this impressive circumstance, that the inspired writers of the New Testament all along assume it as a point which was never, in that age, questioned by true Christians. It influenced, therefore, the turn of their language, and established a *theological style* among them when speaking of Christ, which cannot possibly be reconciled to any hypothesis which excludes his essential Deity; and which no honest, or even rational, men could have fallen into, unless they had acknowledged and worshipped their Master as GOD.

Out of this numerous class of passages, one will suffice for illustration.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD, but

made himself of no reputation," &c, Philip. ii, 5–7. Here the apostle is recommending an humble and benevolent disposition to the Philippians; and he enforces it, not certainly by considerations which themselves needed to be established by proof, or in which the Philippians had not been previously instructed, but in the most natural manner, and that only which a good writer could adopt, by what was already established, and received as true among them. It was already admitted by the Philippians as an undoubted verity of the Christian religion, that before Christ appeared in "the form of a servant," he existed "in the form of God," and before he was "found in fashion as a man," he was such a being as could not think it "robbery to be equal with God." On these very grounds the example of Christ is proposed to his followers, and its imitation enforced upon them. This incidental and familiar manner of introducing so great a subject, clearly shows that the Divinity of Christ was a received doctrine; but, though introduced incidentally, the terms employed by the apostle are as strong and unequivocal as if he had undertaken formally to propose it. It is not necessary to show this by going through that formidable mass of *verbal* criticism which commentators, scholiasts, and other critics, have accumulated around this passage. Happily as to this, as well as many other important texts which form the bases of the great *dogmata* of Christianity, much less is left to verbal criticism than many have supposed; the various clauses, together with the connection, so illustrate and guard the meaning as to fix their sense, and make it obvious to the general reader. "Who being" or "*subsisting* in the form of God." This is the first character of Christ's exalted pre-existent state, and it is adduced as the *ground* of a claim which, for a season, he divested himself of, and became, therefore, an illustrious example of humility and charity. The greatness of Christ is first laid down, then what he renounced of that which was due to his greatness, and finally the condition is introduced to which he stooped or humbled himself. "He thought it not robbery to be EQUAL with God, but made himself of NO REPUTATION, and took upon him the form of a SERVANT." These are, obviously, the three great points in this celebrated text, to the consideration of which we are strictly bound by the apostle's argument. Let each be briefly considered, and it will be seen how impossible it is to explain this passage in any way which does not imply our Lord's essential Divinity. To be or to subsist in "the form of God," is to be truly and essentially GOD. This may, indeed, be argued from the word μορφη, though some have confined its meaning to *external form* or *appearance*. The Socinian exposition, that "the form of God" signifies his power of working miracles, needs no other refutation than that the apostle here speaks of what our Lord was *before* he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. The notion, too, of Whitby and others, who refer it

to the visible glory of God, in which he appeared to the patriarchs, is also disproved by this manifest consideration, that the phrase "SUBSISTING (υπαρχων) in the form of God," describes the permanent pre-existent state of Christ. He subsisted in the form of God, therefore, from eternity, and consequently before he made any visibly glorious manifestations of himself to the patriarchs; nor, as God is invisible and immaterial, and consequently has no likeness of *figure*, could our Lord, in their sense, "*subsist*" in the form or appearance of God. If, indeed, "*form*' means *likeness*, it must be intellectual likeness, and, therefore, to subsist in the form of God is to be God, for he could not be the likeness of God, or, as the apostle has it in the Hebrews, the "*express* image" or character of his person, without being God; for how could he be expressly like, or expressly resemble, or have the appearance of omnipotence, if he were not himself almighty; or of omniscience, if not himself all-knowing? Let us then allow that μορφη in its leading sense has the signification of form, shape, image, and similitude, (8) yet this can only be applied to the Divine Being figuratively. He has no sensible form, no appearance, and nothing can be in this form or image, therefore, but what has the same essential properties and perfections. "Sed age," says Elsner, "largiamur Socinianis μορφην Θεε *speciem et imaginem Dei* esse, tamen valido inde argumento docebimus; *Deum* esse *natura*, qui *in forma et imagine Dei existeret;* nisi Deum personatum, et commentitium, qui speciem quidem et φανταςμα haberet veritate carens, credere et adorare malint." (*Observationes Sacræ in loc.*) But it is not true, as some have hastily stated, that μορφη signifies only the *outward form* of any thing; it is used in Greek authors for the *essential form*, or *nature* itself of a thing, of which examples may be seen in Wetstein, Elsner, Rosenmuller, Schleusner, and others; and accordingly Schleusner explains it "per metonymiam; *ipsa natura et essentia alicujus rei*," and adds, "sic legitur in N. T. Philip. ii, 6, ubi Christus dicitur εν μορφη Θεε υπαρχων ad designandam sublimiorem ipsius naturam." The Greek fathers also understood μορφη in the sense of ουσια, and to use the phrase "being in the form of God," to signify the "being *really* and *truly* GOD."

Thus the term itself is sufficiently explicit of the doctrine; but the context would decide the matter, were the verbal criticism less decidedly in favour of this interpretation. "The form of God" stands opposed to "the form of a servant." This, say those critics who would make the form of God an external appearance only, means "the appearance and behaviour of a bondsman or slave, and not the *essence* of such a person." But δουλος, *a slave*, is not in the New Testament taken in the same opprobrious sense as among us. St. Paul calls himself "the slave of

(8) "1 Forma, externus, habitus, omne quod in oculos occurrit, imago, simulacrum." (*Schleusner.*)

Jesus Christ," and our translators have, therefore, properly rendered the word by *servant*, as more exactly conveying the meaning intended. Now it is certain, that Christ was the servant or minister both of the Father and of his creatures. He himself declares, that he came not "to be ministered unto, but to minister;" and as to be in the *form of a servant* is not, therefore, to have the appearance of a servant, but to be really a servant, so to be in the form of God is to be really GOD. This is rendered still stronger by the following clause, which is exegetic of the preceding, as will appear from the literal rendering, the force of which is obscured by the copulative introduced into the common version. It is not, "and took upon him the form of a servant, *and* was made in the likeness of men," but "*being made* in the likeness of men," which clearly denotes that he took the form of a servant by "being made in the likeness of men," so that, as Bishop Pearson irresistibly argues,

"The phrase 'in the form of God,' not elsewhere mentioned, is used by the apostle with respect unto that other, of 'the form of a servant,' exegetically continued 'in the likeness of men;' and the respect of one unto the other is so necessary, that if the form of God be not real and essential as the form of a servant, or the likeness of man, there is no force in the apostle's words, nor will his argument be fit to work any great degree of humiliation upon the consideration of Christ's exinanition. But by the *form* is certainly understood the true condition of a servant, and by the *likeness* is infallibly meant the real nature of man: nor doth the *fashion*, in which he was found, destroy, but rather assert the truth of his humanity. And therefore, as sure as Christ was really and essentially man, of the same nature with us, in whose similitude he was made; so certainly was he also really and essentially God, of the same nature and being with him, in whose form he did subsist." (*Discourses on the Creed.*)

The greatness of him who "humbled himself" being thus laid down by the apostle, he proceeds to state what, in the process of his humiliation, he waived of that which was due to his greatness. He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation;" or, as many choose to render it, "he *emptied* himself." Whether the clause, "thought it not robbery," be translated "esteemed it not an object to be *caught* at, or eagerly desired, to be as God," or did not think it a "*usurpation*;" or, as our translators have it, a "*robbery*" to be equal with GOD, signifies little; for, after all the criticism expended on this unusual phrase, that Christ had a *right* to that which he might have retained, but chose to waive when he humbled himself, is sufficiently established both by the meaning of the word and by the connection itself. Some Socinians allow the common translation, and their own version is to the same effect,—he "did not esteem it a *prey*," which can only mean, though they attempt to cloud the matter in their

note, that he did not esteem that as his own property to which he had no right. (9) That, then, which he did not account a "*prey*," a seizure of another's right or property, was "to be equal with GOD." Whether, in the phrase το ινα ισα Θεω, to be equal with God, ισα is to be taken adverbially, and translated *as*, *like as*, GOD; or, by enallage, for the singular adjective masculine, and to be rendered *equal* to God, has been matter of dispute. The grammatical authority appears to predominate in favour of the latter, (1) and it is supported by several of the fathers and the ancient versions; but here, again, we are not left to the niceties of verbal criticism. If taken in either way, the sense is much the same: he thought it not a robbery, or usurpation, to be *equal* with God or, *as* God, which, as the sense determines, was an equality of honour and dignity; but made himself of no reputation. For as the phrase, *the form of God*, signifies his essential Divinity, so that of which he "*emptied*" or divested himself for the time was something to which he had a right consequent upon his Divinity; and if to be *equal* with God, or to be *as* God, was his right, as a Divine person, it was not any thing which he was essentially of which he divested himself, for that were impossible, but something which, if he had not been God, it would have been a robbery and usurpation either to claim or retain. This, then, can be nothing else than the assumption of a Divine majesty and glory; the proclamation of his own rights, and the demand of his creatures' praise and homage, the laying aside of which, indeed, is admirably expressed in our translation, "*but made himself of no reputation!*" This is also established by the antithesis in the text. "The form of a servant" stands opposed to "the form of God,"—a real servant to real Divinity; and to be "equal" with God, or, *as* God, in glory, honour, and homage, is contrasted with the humiliations of a human state. "In that state he was made flesh, sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, subject to the infirmities and miseries of this life; in that state he was "made of a woman, made under the law," and so obliged to fulfil the same; in that state he was born, and lived to manhood in a mean condition: was "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" in that state, being thus made man, he took upon him "the form of a servant." If any man doubt how Christ emptied himself, the text will satisfy him,—"by taking the form of a servant:" if any still question how he took the form of a servant, he hath the apostle's solution,—"by being made in the likeness of men." And being found in fashion as a man; being already by his exinanition, in the form of a

(9) "*Non rapinam*, aut spolium alicui, detractum, *duxit*." (*Rosenmuller.*) So the ancient versions. "Non rapinam arbitratus est." (*Vulgate.*) "Non rapinam hoc existimavit." (*Syriac.*)

(1) See Pearson on the Creed, Art. 2, note; Schleusner, Erasmus and Schmidt.

servant, he humbled himself, becoming "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (*Bishop Pearson.*) The first stage of his humiliation was his assuming "the form of a servant;" the completion of it, his "obedience unto death." But what say the Socinians? As with them to be in the form of God means to be invested with miraculous powers, so to empty or divest himself, was his not exerting those powers in order to prevent his crucifixion. The truth, however, is, that he "emptied" himself, not at his crucifixion, but when he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: so that, if to divest or empty himself be explained of laying down his miraculous gifts, he laid them down before he became man, that is, according to them, before he had any existence. There is no alternative, in this and many similar passages, between orthodoxy and the most glaring critical absurdity.

CHAPTER XVI.

HUMANITY OF CHRIST—HYPOSTATIC UNION—ERRORS AS TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

IN the present day, the controversy as to the person of Christ is almost wholly confined to the question of his Divinity; but, in the early ages of the Church, it was necessary to establish his proper humanity. The denial of this appears to have existed as early as the time of St. John, who, in his epistles, excludes from the pale of the Church all who denied that Christ was come IN THE FLESH. As his Gospel, therefore, proclaims the Godhead, so his epistles defend also the doctrine of his humanity.

The source of this ancient error appears to have been a philosophical one. Both in the oriental and Greek schools, it was a favourite notion, that whatever was joined to *matter* was necessarily contaminated by it, and that the highest perfection of this life was abstraction from material things, and, in another, a total and final separation from the body. This opinion was, also, the probable cause of leading some persons, in St. Paul's time, to deny the reality of a resurrection, and to explain it figuratively. But, however that may be, it was one of the chief grounds of the rejection of the proper humanity of Christ among the different branches of the Gnostics, who, indeed, erred as to both natures. The things which the Scriptures attribute to the human nature of our Lord they did not deny; but affirmed that they took place in appearance only, and they were, therefore, called *Docetæ* and *Phantasiastæ*. At a later period, Eutyches fell into a similar error, by teaching that the human nature of Christ was absorbed into the Divine, and that his body had no real existence. These errors have passed away, and dange

now lies only on one side; not, indeed, because men are become less liable or less disposed to err, but because philosophy,—from vain pretences to which, or a proud reliance upon it, almost all great religious errors spring,—has, in later ages, taken a different character.

While these errors denied the real existence of the *body* of Christ, the Apolloninarian heresy rejected the existence of a human *soul* in our Lord, and taught that the Godhead supplied its place. Thus both these views denied to Christ a proper humanity, and both were, accordingly, condemned by the general Church.

Among those who held the union of two natures in Christ, the Divine and human, which, in theological language is called the hypostatical, or personal union, several distinctions were also made which led to a diversity of opinion. The Nestorians acknowledged two persons in our Lord, mystically and more closely united than any human analogy can explain. The Monophysites contended for one person and one nature, the two being supposed to be, in some mysterious manner, confounded. The Monothelites acknowledged two natures and one will. Various other refinements were, at different times, propagated; but the true sense of Scripture appears to have been very accurately expressed by the council of Chalcedon, in the fifth century,—that in Christ there is *one person;* in the unity of person, *two natures*, the Divine and the human; and that there is no change, or mixture, or confusion of these two natures, but that each retains its own distinguishing properties. With this agrees the Athanasian Creed, whatever be its date,—"Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting—Who although he be God and man, yet he is not two; but one Christ: one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by taking the manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." The Church of England, by adopting this creed, has adopted its doctrine on the hypostatical union, and has farther professed it in her second article. "The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin of her substance, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man."

Whatever objections may be raised against these views by the mere reason of man, unable to comprehend mysteries so high, but often bold enough to impugn them, they certainly exhibit the doctrine of the New Testament on these important subjects, though expressed in different terms. Nor are these formularies to be charged with *originating* such distinctions and adding them to the simplicity of Scripture, as they

often unjustly are by those who, either from lurking errors in their own minds, or from a vain affectation of being independent of human authority, are most prone to question them. Such expositions of faith were rendered necessary by the dangerous speculations and human refinements to which we have above adverted; and were intended to be (what they may be easily proved from Scripture to be in reality) summaries of inspired doctrines; not new distinctions, but declarations of what had been before taught by the Holy Spirit on the subject of the hypostatical union of natures in Christ; and the accordance of these admirable summaries with the Scriptures themselves will be very obvious to all who yield to their plain and unperverted testimony. That Christ is very GOD, has been already proved from the Scriptures, at considerable length; that he was truly a man, no one will be found to doubt; that he is but one person, is sufficiently clear from this, that no distinction into two was ever made by himself, or by his apostles, and from actions peculiar to Godhead being sometimes ascribed to him under his human appellations; and actions and sufferings peculiar to humanity being also predicated of him under Divine titles. That in him there is no confusion of the two natures, is evident from the absolute manner in which both his natures are constantly spoken of in the Scriptures. His Godhead was not deteriorated by uniting itself with a human body, for "he is the true God;" his humanity was not, while on earth, exalted into properties which made it different in kind to the humanity of his creatures; for, "as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the SAME." If the Divine nature in him had been imperfect, it would have lost its essential character, for it is essential to Deity to be perfect and complete; if any of the essential properties of human nature had been wanting, he would not have been man; if, as some of the preceding notions implied, Divine and human had been mixed and confounded in him, he would have been a compounded being, neither God nor man. Nothing was deficient in his humanity, nothing in his Divinity, and yet he is one Christ. This is clearly the doctrine of the Scripture, and it is admirably expressed in the creeds above quoted; and, on that account, they are entitled to great respect. They embody the sentiments of some of the greatest men that ever lived in the Church, in language weighed with the utmost care and accuracy; and they are venerable records of the faith of distant ages.

These two circumstances, the *completeness of each nature*, and *the union of both in one person*, is the only key to the language of the New Testament, and so entirely explains and harmonizes the whole as to afford the strongest proof, next to its explicit verbal statements, of the doctrine that our Lord is at once truly God and truly man. On the other hand, the impracticability of giving a consistent explanation of the

testimony of God "concerning his Son Jesus Christ" on all other hypotheses, entirely confutes them. In one of two ways only will it be found, by every one who makes the trial honestly, that ALL the passages of holy writ respecting the person of Christ can be explained; either by referring them, according to the rule of the ancient fathers, to the Θεολογια, by which they meant every thing that related to the Divinity of our Saviour; or to the Οικονομια, by which they meant his incarnation, and every thing that he did in the flesh to procure the salvation of mankind. This distinction is expressed in modern theological language, by considering some things which are spoken of Christ, as said of his Divine, others of his human nature; and he who takes this principle of interpretation along with him will seldom find any difficulty in apprehending the sense of the sacred writers, though the subjects themselves be often, to human minds, inscrutable.

Does any one ask, for instance, if Jesus Christ was truly GOD, how he could be born and die? how he could grow in wisdom and stature? how he could be subject to law? be tempted? stand in need of prayer? how his soul could be "exceeding sorrowful even unto death?" be "forsaken of his Father?" purchase the Church with "his own blood?" have "a joy set before him?" be exalted? have "all power in heaven and earth" *given* to him? &c. The answer is, that he was also MAN.

If, on the other hand, it be a matter of surprise, that a VISIBLE MAN should heal diseases at his will, and without referring to any higher authority, as he often did; still the winds and the waves; know the thoughts of men's hearts; foresee his own passion in all its circumstances; authoritatively forgive sins; be exalted to absolute dominion over every creature in heaven and earth; be present wherever two or three are gathered in his name; be with his disciples to the end of the world; claim universal homage and the bowing of the knee of all creatures to his name; be associated with the Father in solemn ascriptions of glory and thanksgiving, and bear even the awful names of God, names of description and revelation, names which express Divine attributes:—what is the answer? Can the Socinian scheme, which allows him to be a man *only*, produce a reply? Can it furnish a reasonable interpretation of texts of sacred writ which affirm all these things? Can it suggest any solution which does not imply that the sacred penmen were not only careless writers, but writers who, if they had studied to be misunderstood, could not more delusively have expressed themselves? The only hypothesis, explanatory of all these statements, is, that Christ is GOD as well as MAN, and by this the consistency of the sacred writers is brought out, and a harmonizing strain of sentiment is seen compacting the Scriptures into one agreeing and mutually adjusted revelation.

But the union of the two natures in Christ in one hypostasis, or person, is equally essential to the full exposition of the Scriptures, as the existence of two distinctively, the Divine and the human; and without it many passages lose all force, because they lose all meaning. In what possible sense could it be said of THE WORD, that "he was made (or became) FLESH," if no such personal unity existed? The Socinians themselves seem to acknowledge the force of this, and therefore translate "and the Word *was* flesh," affirming falsely, as various critics have abundantly shown, that the most usual meaning of γινομαι is *to be*. Without the hypostatical union, how could the argument of our Lord be supported, that the Messiah is both David's SON and David's LORD? If this is asserted of two persons, then the argument is gone; if of one, then two natures, one which had authority as *Lord*, and the other capable of natural descent, were united in one person. Allowing that we have established it, that the appellative "*Son of God*" is the designation of a Divine relation, but for this personal union the visible Christ could not be, according to St. Peter's confession, "the Son of the living God." By this doctrine we also learn how it was that "the Church of GOD" was "purchased by his OWN BLOOD." Even if we concede the genuine reading to be "the Lord," this concession yields nothing to the Socinians, unless the term LORD were a human title, which has been already disproved, and unless a mere *man* could be "LORD both of the dead and the living," could wield universal sovereignty, and be entitled to universal homage. If, then, the title "THE LORD" be an appellation of Christ's superior nature, in no other sense could it be said that the Church was purchased by HIS OWN blood, than by supposing the existence of that union which we call personal; a union which alone distinguishes the sufferings of Christ from that of his martyred followers, gave to them a *merit* which theirs had not, and made "his blood" capable of PURCHASING the salvation of the "Church." For, disallow that union, and we can see no possible meaning in calling the blood of Christ "the blood of God," or, if it please better, "of the Lord;" or in what that great peculiarity consisted which made it capable of *purchasing* or *redeeming*.

Dr. Pye Smith, in his very able work on the person of Christ, has rather inconsiderately blamed the orthodox, for "the very serious offence of sometimes using language which applies to the Divine nature the circumstances and properties which could only attach to his humanity,' as giving unhappy occasion to the objections and derisions of their opponents. As he gives no instances, he had his eye, probably, upon some extreme cases; but if he meant it as a remark of general application, it seems to have arisen from a very mistaken view, and assumes, that the objections of opponents lie rather against *terms* than against the doctrine of Christ's Divinity itself.

This is so far from being the case, that, if the orthodox were to attend to the caution given by this writer on this subject, they would not approach one step nearer to the conversion of those who are in this fundamental error, supporting it, as they do, by perversions so manifest, and by criticisms so shameless. I am no apologist, however, of real "errors and faults" in theological language; but the practice referred to, so far from being "a serious offence," has the authority of the writers of the New Testament. *Argumentatively*, the distinction between the Divine and human natures, according to the rule before given, must be maintained; but when speaking cursorily, and on the assumption of the unquestionable truth of the hypostatic union of the Divine and human natures,—a *manner* of speaking, which, it is hoped, all true Christians adopt, as arising from their settled convictions on this point,—those very terms, so common among the orthodox, and so objectionable to those who "deny the Lord that bought them," must be maintained in spite of "derision," or the language of the New Testament must be dropped, or at least be made very select, if this dangerous, and in the result, this betraying courtesy be adopted. For what does Dr. P. Smith gain, when cautioning the believer against the use of the phrase "the blood of GOD," by reminding him that there is reason to prefer the reading, "the Church of *the Lord*, which he hath purchased by his *own blood?*" The orthodox contend, that the appellation "THE LORD," when applied to our Saviour, is his title as GOD, and the heterodox know, also, that the "blood of the Lord" is a phrase with us entirely equivalent to "the blood of GOD." They know, too, that we neither believe that "GOD" nor "THE LORD" could die; but in using the established phrase, the all-important doctrine of the existence of such a union between the two natures of our Lord as to make the blood which he shed *more* than the blood of a mere man, *more* than the blood of his mere humanity itself, is maintained and exhibited; and while we allow that God could not die, yet that there is a most important sense in which the blood of Christ was "the blood of GOD."

We do not attempt to explain this mystery, but we find it on record; and, in point of fact, that careful appropriation of the properties of the two natures to each respectively, which Dr. Pye Smith recommends, is not very frequent in the New Testament, and for this obvious reason, that the question of our Lord's Divinity is more generally introduced as an indisputed principle, than argued upon. It is true, that the Apostle Paul lays it down, that our Lord was of the seed of David, "*according to the* FLESH," and "*the Son of God, according to the* SPIRIT OF HOLINESS." Here is an instance of the *distinction;* but generally this is not observed by the apostles, because the equally fundamental doctrine was always present to them, that the SAME PERSON who was FLESH was also

truly GOD. Hence they scruple not to say, that "the Lord of glory was crucified," that "the Prince of life was killed," and that HE who was "in the form of God," became "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We return, from this digression, to notice a few other passages, the meaning of which can only be opened by the doctrine of the personal union of the Divine and human natures in Christ. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead BODILY," Col. ii, 9; not by a type and figure, but, as the word σωματικως signifies *really* and *substantially*, and for the full exposition, we must add, by personal union; for we have no other idea by which to explain an expression never used to signify the inhabitation of good men by God, and which is here applied to Christ in a way of eminence and peculiarity. (2)

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had BY HIMSELF purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," Heb. i, 3. To this passage, also, the hypostatical union is the only key. Of whom does the apostle speak, when he says, "when he had BY HIMSELF purged our sins," but of Him who is "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person?" HE, by HIMSELF, "purged our sins;" yet this was done by the shedding of his blood. In that higher nature, however, he could not suffer death; and nothing could make the sufferings of his humanity a purification of sins BY HIMSELF, but such a union as should constitute one person:—for, unless this be allowed, either the characters of Divinity in the preceding verses are characters of a merely human being; or else that higher nature was capable of suffering death; or, if not, the purification was not made by HIMSELF, which yet the text affirms.

In fine, all passages which (not to mention many others) come under the following classes have their true interpretation thus laid open, and are generally utterly unmeaning on any other hypothesis.

1. Those which, like some of the foregoing, speak of the *efficacy* of the sufferings of Christ for the remission of sins. In this class the two following may be given as examples. Heb. ii, 14, "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," &c. Here the efficacy of the death of Christ is explicitly stated; but as explicitly is it said to be the death of one who partook of flesh and blood, or who *assumed* human nature. The power of deliverance is ascribed to him who thus invested himself with a nature below that of his own original nature; but in that lower nature

(2) "Σωματικως, h. e. vere, perfectissime, non typice, et umbraliter, sicut in V T. Deus se manifestavit. Est autem inhabitatio illa et unio personalis, et singularissima." (*Glassius.*)

HE dies, and by that DEATH he delivers those who had been all their lifetime subject to bondage. The second is Colossians i, 14. &c, "In whom we have redemption through HIS blood, even the forgiveness of sins, WHO is the image of the invisible God," &c. In this passage, the lofty description which is given of the person of Christ stands in immediate connection with the mention of the efficacy of "his blood," and is to be considered as the reason why, through that blood, redemption and remission of sins became attainable. Thus "without shedding of blood there could be no remission;" but the blood of Jesus only is thus efficacious, who is "the image of the invisible God," the "Creator" of all things. HIS blood it could not be but for the hypostatical union; and it is equally true, that but for that he could have had no blood to shed; because, as "the image of the invisible God," that is, God's equal, or God himself, his nature was incapable of death.

2. In the second class are all those passages which argue from the compassion which our Lord manifested in his humiliation, and his own experience of sufferings, to the exercise of confidence in him by his people in dangers and afflictive circumstances. Of these the following may be given for the sake of illustration. Heb. iv, 15, 16, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Several similar passages occur in the early part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the argument of them all is precisely the same. The humiliation of our Lord, and his acquaintance with human woes, may assure us of his sympathy; but sympathy is not help. He is represented, therefore, as the source of "*succour*," as the "*Author of salvation*," "*the Captain of our salvation*," in consequence of the sufferings he endured; and to him all his people are directed to fly for aid in prayer, and by entire trust in his power, grace, and presence, to assure themselves that timely succour and final salvation shall be bestowed upon them by him. Now here, also, it is clear, that the *sufferer* and the *Saviour* are the same *person*. The *man* might *suffer*; but sufferings could not enable the man to *save*; they could give no new qualification to human nature, nor bestow upon that nature any new right. But, beside the nature which suffered, and learned the bitterness of human woes by experience, there is a nature which can know the sufferings of all others, in all places, at all times; which can also ascertain the "time of need" with exactness, and the "grace" suitable to it; which can effectually "help" and sustain the sorrows of the very *heart*, a power peculiar to Divinity, and finally bestow "eternal salvation." This must be Divine; but it is one in personal union with that which suffered and was taught sympathy, and it is this union constitutes that "GREAT HIGH PRIEST" of our profession,

that "merciful and faithful High Priest," who is able "to succour us when we are tempted." Thus, as it has been well observed on this subject, "It is by the union of two natures in one person that Christ is qualified to be the Saviour of the world. He became man, that, with the greatest possible advantage to those whom he was sent to instruct, he might teach them the nature and the will of God; that his life might be their example; that by being once compassed with the infirmities of human nature, he might give them assurance of his fellow feeling; that by suffering on the cross he might make atonement for their sins; and that in his reward they might behold the earnest and the pattern of theirs.

"But had Jesus been only man, or had he been one of the spirits that surround the throne of God, he could not have accomplished the work which he undertook: for the whole obedience of every creature being due to the Creator, no part of that obedience can be placed to the account of other creatures, so as to supply the defects of their service, or to rescue them from the punishment which they deserve. The Scriptures, therefore, reveal, that he who appeared upon earth as man, is also God, and as God, was mighty to save; and by this revelation they teach us, that the merit of our Lord's obedience, and the efficacy of his interposition, depend upon the hypostatical union.

"All modern sects of Christians agree in admitting that the greatest benefits arise to us from the Saviour of the world being man; but the Arians and Socinians contend earnestly, that his sufferings do not derive any value from his being God; and their reasoning is specious. You say, they argue, that Jesus Christ, who suffered for the sins of men, is both God and man. You must either say that God suffered, or that he did not suffer: if you say that God suffered, you do indeed affix an infinite value to the sufferings; but you affirm that the Godhead is capable of suffering, which is both impious and absurd: if you say that God did not suffer, then, although the person that suffered had both a Divine and a human nature, the sufferings were merely those of a man, for, according to your own system, the two natures are distinct, and the Divine is impassible.

"In answer to this method of arguing, we may admit that the Godhead cannot suffer, and we do not pretend to explain the kind of support which the human nature derived, under its sufferings, from the Divine, or the manner in which the two were united. But from the uniform language of Scripture, which magnifies the love of God in giving his only-begotten Son, which speaks in the highest terms of the preciousness of the blood of Christ, which represents him as coming, in the body that was prepared for him, to do that which sacrifice and burnt offering could not do: from all this we infer that there was a value, a merit, in the sufferings of this person, superior to that which belonged to the sufferings of

any other: and as the same Scriptures intimate, in numberless places, the strictest union between the Divine and human nature of Christ, by applying to him promiscuously the actions which belong to each nature, we hold that it is impossible for us to separate in our imagination, this peculiar value which they affix to his sufferings from the peculiar dignity of his person.

"The hypostatical union, then, is the corner stone of our religion. We are too much accustomed, in all our researches, to perceive that things are united, without our being able to investigate the bond which unites them, to feel any degree of surprise that we cannot answer all the questions which ingenious men have proposed upon this subject; but we can clearly discern, in those purposes of the incarnation of the Son of God which the Scriptures declare, the reason why they have dwelt so largely upon his Divinity; and if we are careful to take into our view the whole of that description which they give of the person by whom the remedy in the Gospel was brought; if, in our speculations concerning him, we neither lose sight of the two parts which are clearly revealed nor forget, what we cannot comprehend, that union between the two parts which is necessarily implied in the revelation of them, we shall perceive, in the character of the Messiah, a completeness and a suitableness to the design of his coming, which of themselves create a strong presumption that we have rightly interpreted the Scriptures." (*Dr. Hill.*)

On this evidence from the Holy Scriptures the doctrine of the Divinity of our blessed Saviour rests. Into the argument from antiquity my limits will not allow me to enter. If the great "falling away," predicted by St. Paul, had involved, generally, this high doctrine; if both the Latin and Greek Churches had wholly departed from the faith, instead of having united, without intermission, to say, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ," "Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father," the truth of God would not have been made of "none effect." God would still have been true, though every man, from the age of inspiration, had become "a liar." The Socinians have, of late years, shown great anxiety to obtain some suffrages from antiquity in their favour, and have collected every instance possible of early departure from the faith. They might, indeed, have found heretical pravity and its adherents, without travelling out of the New Testament; men not only *near* the apostolic age, but in the very days of the apostles, who rejected the resurrection, who consented not "to wholesome doctrine," who made "shipwreck of faith," as well as of a good conscience, who denied "the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," "the Lord that bought them." This kind of antiquity is, in truth, in their favour; and, as human nature is substantially the same in all ages, there is as much reason to expect errors in one age as another; but that any body of

Christians, in any sense entitled to be considered as an acknowledged branch of the Church of Christ, can be found, in primitive times, to give any sanction to their opinions and interpretations of Scripture, they have failed to establish. For full information on the subject of the opinions of the primitive Churches, and a full refutation of all the pretences which Arians and Socinians, in these later times, have made to be, in part, supported by primitive authority, the works of Bishop Bull, Dr Waterland, and Bishop Horsley, (3) must be consulted; and the result will show, that in the interpretation of the Scriptures given above, we are supported by the successive and according testimonies of all that is truly authoritative in those illustrious ages which furnished so many imperishable writings for the edification of the future Church, and so many martyrs and confessors of "the truth as it is in Jesus."

Among the numerous errors, with respect to the person of our Lord, which formerly sprung up in the Church, and were opposed, with an ever watchful zeal, by its authorities, three only can be said to have much influence in the present day, Arianism, Sabellianism, and Socinianism. In our own country, the two former are almost entirely merged in the last, whose characteristic is the tenet of the simple humanity of Christ. ARIUS, who gave his name to the first, seems to have wrought some of the floating errors of previous times into a kind of system, which, however, underwent various modifications among his followers. The distinguishing tenet of this system was, that Christ was the first and most exalted of creatures; that he was produced in a peculiar manner, and endowed with great perfections; that by him God made the world; that he alone proceeded immediately from GOD, while other things were produced mediately by him, and that all things were put under his administration. The semi-Arians divided from the Arians, but still differed from the orthodox, in refusing to admit that the Son was *homoousios*, or of the *same* substance with the Father; but acknowledged him to be *homoiousios*, of a *like* substance with the Father. It was only, however, in appearance that they came nearer to the truth than the Arians themselves, for they contended that this *likeness* to the Father in essence was not by *nature*, but by peculiar privilege. In their system Christ, therefore, was but a creature. A still farther refinement on this doctrine was, in this country, advocated by Dr. Samuel Clarke, which Dr. Waterland, his great and illustrious opponent, showed, notwithstanding the orthodox terms employed, still implied that Christ was a created being, unless an evident absurdity were admitted. (4)

(3) See also Wilson's Illustration of the Method of explaining the New Testament by the early Opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ; and Dr Jamieson's Vindication, &c.

(4) Dr. Samuel Clarke's hypothesis was, that there is one Supreme Being, who is the Father, and two subordinate, derived, and dependent beings. But he

The *Sabellian* doctrine stands equally opposed to trinitarianism and to the Arian system. It asserts the Divinity of the Son and the Spirit against the latter, and denies the personality of both, in opposition to the former. Sabellius taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are only denominations of one hypostasis; in other words, that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the Son or Word are virtues, emanations, or functions only: that, under the Old Testament God delivered the law as Father; under the New, dwelt among men, or was incarnate, as the Son; and descended on the apostles as the Spirit. Because their scheme, by denying a *real Sonship*, obliged them to acknowledge that it was the Father who suffered for the sins of men, the Sabellians were often, in the early ages, called Patripassians.

On the refutation of these errors it is not necessary to dwell, both because they have now little influence, and chiefly because both are involved in the Socinian question, and are decided by the establishment of the Scriptural doctrine of a trinity of Divine persons in the unity of the Godhead. If Jesus Christ be the Divine Son of God; if he was "sent" from God, and "returned" to God; if he distinguished himself from the Father both in his Divine and human nature, saying, as to the former, "I and my Father are ONE," and as to the latter, "My Father is GREATER than I;" if there be any meaning at all in his declaration, "that no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but the Son," words which cannot, by any possibility, be spoken of an *official* distinction, or of an *emanation* or *operation*; then all these passages prove a real personality, and are incapable of being explained by a *modal* one. This is the answer to the Sabellian opinion; and as to the Arian hypothesis, it falls, with Socinianism, before that series of proofs which has already been adduced from Holy Writ, to establish the eternity, consubstantiality, coequality, and, consequently, the proper Divinity of our Redeemer; and, perhaps, the true reason why not even the semi-Arianism, argued with so much subtlety by Dr. Samuel Clarke, has been able to retain any influence among us, is less to be attributed to the able and learned writings of Dr. Waterland and others, who chased the error through all its changeful transformations, than to the manifest impossibility of conceiving of a being which is neither truly God nor a creature; and the total absence of all countenance in the Scriptures, however tortured, in favour of this opinion. Socinianism assumes a plausibility in some of its aspects, because Christ

objected to call Christ a creature, thinking him something between a created and a self-existent nature. Dr. C. appealed to the fathers; and Petavius, a learned Jesuit, in his *Dogmata Theologica*, had previously endeavoured to prove that the ante-Nicene fathers leaned to Arianism. Bishop Bull, in his great work on this subject, and Dr. Waterland may be considered as having fully put that question to rest in opposition to both

was really a man; but semi-Arianism is a mere hypothesis, which can scarcely find a text of Scripture to pervert.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost.

The discussion of this great point of Christian doctrine may be included in much narrower limits than those I have assigned to the Divinity of Christ, so many of the *principles* on which it rests having been closely considered, and because the Deity of the Spirit, in several instances, inevitably follows from that of the Son. As the object of this work is to educe the doctrine of the sacred Scriptures on all the leading articles of faith, it will, however, be necessary to show the evidence which is there given to the two propositions in the title of the chapter:—that the Holy Ghost (from the Saxon word Gast, a *Spirit*,) is a person; and that he is God.

As to the *manner* of his being, the orthodox doctrine is, that as Christ is God by an eternal filiation, so the Spirit is God by *procession* from the Father and the Son. "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who *proceedeth* from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son together, is worshipped and glorified." (*Nicene Creed.*) "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but *proceeding*." (*Athanasian Creed.*) "The Holy Ghost, *proceeding* from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God." (*Articles of the English Church.*) The Latin Church introduced the term *spiration*, from *spiro*, to breathe, to denote the manner of this *procession*; on which Dr. Owen remarks, "as the vital breath of a man has a continual emanation from him, and yet is never separated utterly from his person, or forsaketh him, so doth the Spirit of the Father and the Son proceed from them by a continual Divine emanation, still abiding one with them." On this refined view little can be said which has obvious Scriptural authority; and yet the very term by which the third person in the trinity is designated wind or breath may as to the third person, be designed, like the term Son applied to the second, to convey, though imperfectly, *some intimation of that manner of being by which both are distinguished* from each other, and from the Father; and it was a remarkable action of our Lord, and one certainly which does not discountenance this idea, that when he imparted the Holy Ghost to his disciples, "he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx, 22. (5)

(5) "The Father hath relation to the Son, as the Father of the Son; the Son to the Father, as the Son of the Father; and the Holy Ghost being the *spirit*, or

But whatever we may think as to the doctrine of "*spiration*" the PROCESSION of the Holy Ghost rests on direct Scriptural authority, and is thus stated by Bishop Pearson:—

"Now this procession of the Spirit, in reference to the Father, is delivered expressly, in relation to the Son, and is contained virtually in the Scriptures. First, it is expressly said, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father, as our Saviour testifieth, 'When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,' John xv, 26. And this is also evident from what hath been already asserted: for being the Father and the Spirit are the same God, and being so the same in the unity of the nature of God, are yet distinct in the personality, one of them must have the same nature from the other; and because the Father hath been already shown to have it from none, it followeth that the Spirit hath it from him.

"Secondly, though it be not expressly spoken in the Scripture, that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and Son, yet the substance of the same truth is virtually contained there; because those very expressions, which are spoken of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Father, for that reason because he proceedeth from the Father, are also spoken of the same Spirit in relation to the Son; and therefore there must be the same reason presupposed in reference to the Son, which is expressed in reference to the Father. Because the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, therefore it is called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of the Father. 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you,' Matt. x, 20. For by the language of the apostle, the Spirit of God is the Spirit which is of God, saying, 'The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. And we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God,' 1 Cor. ii, 11, 12. Now the same Spirit is also called the Spirit of the Son; for 'because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,' Gal. iv, 6: the Spirit of Christ; 'Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,' Rom. viii, 9; 'even the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets,' 1 Peter i, 11; the Spirit of Jesus Christ, as the apostle speaks, 'I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,' Phil. i, 19. If then the Holy Ghost be called the Spirit of the Father, because he proceedeth from the Father, it followeth that, being called also the Spirit of the Son, he proceedeth also from the Son.

"Again: because the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father, he is therefore sent by the Father, as from him who hath by the original com-

breath of the Father and the Son, to both." (*Lawson's Theo. Pol.*) But though breath or wind is the radical signification of πνευμα, as also of *spiritus*, yet, probably from its sacredness, it is but rarely used in that sense in the New Testament.

munication, a right of mission; as 'the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send,' John xiv, 26. But the same Spirit which is sent by the Father is also sent by the Son, as he saith, 'When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you.' Therefore the Son hath the same right of mission with the Father, and consequently must be acknowledged to have communicated the same essence. The Father is never sent by the Son, because he received not the Godhead from him; but the Father sendeth the Son, because he communicated the Godhead to him: in the same manner, neither the Father nor the Son is ever sent by the Holy Spirit; because neither of them received the Divine nature from the Spirit: but both the Father and the Son sendeth the Holy Ghost, because the Divine nature, common to both the Father and the Son, was communicated by them both to the Holy Ghost. As therefore the Scriptures declare expressly, that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father; so do they also virtually teach that he proceedeth from the Son." (*Discourses on the Creed.*)

In opposition to the doctrine of the personality and Deity of the Spirit, stands the Socinian hypothesis, which I state before the evidence from Scripture is adduced, that it may be seen, upon examination of inspired testimony, how far it is supported by that authority. ARIUS regarded the Spirit not only as a creature, but as created by Christ, κτισμα κτισματος, the creature of a creature. Some time afterward, his personality was wholly denied by the Arians, and he was considered as the *exerted energy* of God. This appears to have been the notion of Socinus, and, with occasional modifications, has been adopted by his followers. They sometimes regard him as an attribute, and at others resolve the passages in which he is spoken of into a periphrasis, or circumlocution for God himself; or, to express both in one, into a figure of speech.

In establishing the proper personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost, the first argument is drawn from the frequent association, in Scripture, of a *person*, under that appellation, with two other persons, one of whom, "*the Father*," is by all acknowledged to be *Divine;* and the ascription to each of them, or to the three in *union*, of the same acts, titles, and authority, with worship of the same kind, and, for any distinction that is made, in an equal degree. This argument has already been applied to establish the Divinity of the Son, whose personality is not questioned; and the terms of the proposition may be as satisfactorily established as to the Holy Spirit, and will prove at the same time both his personality and his Divinity.

With respect to the Son, we have seen that, as so great and fundamental a doctrine as his Deity might naturally be expected to be announced in the Old Testament revelation, though its full manifestation should be reserved to the New; so it was, in fact, not faintly shadowed forth, but displayed with so much clearness as to become an article of faith in the Jewish Church. The manifestation of the existence and

Divinity of the Holy Spirit may also be expected in the law and the prophets, and is, in fact, to be traced there with equal certainty. The SPIRIT is represented as an agent in creation, "moving upon the face of the waters;" and it forms no objection to the argument, that creation is ascribed to the Father, and also to the Son, but a great confirmation of it. That creation should be effected by all the three persons of the Godhead, though acting in different respects, yet so that each should be a *Creator*, and, therefore, both a person and a Divine person can be explained only by their unity in one essence. On every other hypothesis this Scriptural *fact* is disallowed, and therefore no other hypothesis can be true. If the Spirit of God be a mere influence, then he is not a *Creator*, distinct from the Father and the Son, because he is not a person; but this is refuted both by the passage just quoted and by Psalm xxxiii, 6, "By the WORD OF THE LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the BREATH (Heb. SPIRIT) of his mouth." This is farther confirmed by Job xxxiii, 4, "The SPIRIT OF GOD hath made me, and the *breath of the Almighty* hath given me life;" where the second clause is obviously exegetic of the former, and the whole text proves that, in the patriarchal age, the followers of the true religion ascribed creation to the Spirit, as well as to the Father; and that one of his appellations was "the BREATH of the Almighty." Did such passages stand alone, there might indeed be some plausibility in the criticism which solves them by a personification; but, connected as they are with that whole body of evidence, which has been and shall be adduced, as to the concurring doctrine of both Testaments, they are inexpugnable. Again: if the personality of the Son and the Spirit be allowed, and yet it is contended that they were but *instruments* in creation, through whom the creative power of *another* operated, but which creative power was not possessed by them; on this hypothesis, too, neither the Spirit nor the Son can be said to *create*, any more than Moses created the serpent into which his rod was turned, and the Scriptures are again contradicted. To this association of the three persons in creative acts may be added a like association in acts of PRESERVATION, which has been well called a continued *creation*, and by that term is expressed in the following passage: Psalm civ, 27–30, "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to dust: thou SENDEST FORTH THY SPIRIT, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth." It is not surely here meant that the Spirit, by which the generations of animals are perpetuated, is *wind;* and if he be called an attribute, wisdom, power, or both united, where do we read of such attributes being "sent," "sent forth from God?" The personality of the Spirit is here as clearly marked as when St. Paul speaks of God "sending forth the Spirit of his Son," and when our Lord promises to

"*send*" the Comforter; and as the upholding and preserving of created things is ascribed to the Father and the Son, so here they are ascribed, also, to the Spirit, "sent forth from" God to "create and renew the face of the earth."

The next association of the three persons we find in the *inspiration* of the prophets. "GOD spake unto our fathers by the prophets," says St. Paul, Heb. i, 1. St. Peter declares, that these "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST," 2 Pet. i, 21; and also that it was "the Spirit of CHRIST which was in them," 1 Pet. i, 11. We may defy any Socinian to interpret these three passages by making the Spirit an influence or attribute, and thereby reducing the term Holy Ghost into a figure of speech. "*God*," in the first passage, is, unquestionably, God the Father, and the "holy men of God," the prophets, would then, according to this view, be moved by the *influence* of the Father; but the influence, according to the third passage, which was the source of their inspiration, was the Spirit, or the *influence* of "Christ." Thus the passages contradict each other. Allow the trinity in unity, and you have no difficulty in calling the Spirit, the Spirit of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son, or the Spirit of either; but if the Spirit be an influence, that influence cannot be the influence of two persons, one God, and the other a creature. Even if they allowed the pre-existence of Christ, with Arians, the passages are inexplicable by Socinians; but, denying his pre-existence, they have no subterfuge but to interpret "the Spirit of Christ," the Spirit which prophesied of Christ, (*New Version in loc.*) which is a purely gratuitous paraphrase; or "the spirit of an *anointed one*, or *prophet*;" that is, the prophet's own spirit, which is just as gratuitous, and as unsupported by any parallel, as the former. If, however, the Holy Spirit be the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, united in one essence, the passages are easily harmonized. In conjunction with the Father and the Son, he is the source of that prophetic inspiration under which the prophets spoke and acted. So the same SPIRIT which raised Christ from the dead is said by St. Peter to have preached by Noah, while the ark was preparing, an allusion to the passage, "My Spirit shall not always *strive* (*contend, debate*) with man." This, we may observe, affords an eminent proof, that the writers of the New Testament understood the phrase "the Spirit of God," as it occurs in the Old Testament, *personally*. For, whatever may be the full meaning of that difficult passage in St. Peter, Christ is clearly declared to have preached by the Spirit in the days of Noah; that is, he, by the Spirit, inspired Noah to preach. If, then, the apostles understood that the Holy Ghost was a person, a point which will presently be established, we have, in the text just quoted from the book of Genesis, a key to the meaning of those texts in the Old Testament, where the phrases "My Spirit," "the Spirit of God," and "the Spirit of the Lord,"

occur; and inspired authority is thus afforded us to interpret them as of a *person;* and if of a person, the very effort made by Socinians to deny his personality, itself indicates that that person must, from the lofty titles and works ascribed to him, be inevitably Divine. Such phrases occur in many passages of the Hebrew Scriptures; but in the following the Spirit is also eminently distinguished from two other persons. "And now the LORD GOD and his SPIRIT hath sent ME." Isa. xlviii, 16; or, rendered better, "hath sent ME and his SPIRIT," both terms being in the accusative case. "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read:—for my mouth it hath commanded, and HIS SPIRIT it hath gathered them," Isa. xxxiv, 16. "I am with you, saith the LORD OF HOSTS: according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so MY SPIRIT remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the LORD OF HOSTS,—I will shake all nations, and the DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS shall come," Haggai ii, 4–7. Here, also, the SPIRIT of the Lord is seen collocated with the LORD OF HOSTS and the DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS, who is the Messiah. For other instances of the indication of a trinity of Divine persons in the Old Testament, see chap. 9.

Three persons, and three only, are associated also, both in the Old and New Testament, as objects of supreme worship; as the one *name* in which the religious act of solemn benediction is performed, and to which men are bound by solemn religious covenant.

In the plural form of the name of God, which has already been considered, (*chapter* 9,) each received equal adoration. That threefold personality seems to have given rise to the standing form of triple benediction used by the Jewish high priest, also before mentioned, (*chapter* 9.) The very important fact, that, in the vision of Isaiah, chapter vi, the LORD OF HOSTS, who spake unto the prophet, is in Acts xxviii, 25, said to be the HOLY GHOST who spake to the prophet, while St. John declares that the glory which Isaiah saw was the *glory of* CHRIST, proves, indisputably, (*chapter* 9,) that each of the three persons bears this august appellation; it gives also the reason for the threefold repetition "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY," and it exhibits the prophet and the very seraphs in deep and awful adoration before the triune Lord of hosts. Both the prophet and the seraphim were, therefore, worshippers of the Holy Ghost and of the Son, at the very time and by the very acts in which they worshipped the Father, which proves that, as the three persons received equal homage in a case which does not admit of the evasion of pretended superior and inferior worship, they are equal in majesty, glory, and essence.

As in the tabernacle form of benediction, the triune Jehovah is recognized as the source of all grace and peace to his creatures; so in apostolic formula of blessing, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the COMMUNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, be with you all.

Amen." Here the personality of the three is kept distinct, and the *prayer* to the three is, that Christians may have a *common participation* of the Holy Spirit, that is, doubtless, as he was promised by our Lord to his disciples, as a Comforter, as the source of light and spiritual life, as the author of regeneration. Thus the Spirit is acknowledged, equally with the Father and the Son, to be the source and the giver of the highest spiritual blessings, while the solemn *ministerial* benediction is, from its specific character, to be regarded as an act of *prayer* to each of the three persons, and therefore is, at once, an acknowledgment of the Divinity and personality of each. The same remark applies to Rev. i, 4, 5, "Grace be unto you and peace from Him which was, and which is, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne," (an emblematical representation, in reference, probably, to the golden branch with its seven lamps,) "and from Jesus Christ." The style of the book sufficiently accounts for the Holy Spirit being called "the seven spirits;" but no created spirit or company of created spirits are ever spoken of under that appellation; and the place assigned to the seven spirits between the mention of the Father and the Son, indicates, with certainty, that one of the sacred three, so eminent, and so exclusively eminent in both dispensations, is intended.

The form of baptism next presents itself with demonstrative evidence on the two points before us, the personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is the form of COVENANT by which the sacred three become our ONE or ONLY GOD, and we become HIS people. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in THE NAME of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." In what manner is this text to be disposed of, if the personality of the Holy Ghost is denied? Is the form of baptism to be so understood as to imply that it is baptism in the name of one *God*, one *creature*, and one *attribute*? The grossness of this absurdity refutes it, and proves that here, at least, there can be no personification. If all the three, therefore, are persons, are we to make Christian baptism a baptism in the name of one God and two creatures? This would be too near an approach to idolatry, or rather, it would be idolatry itself; for, considering baptism as an act of dedication to God, the acceptance of God as our God, on our part, and the renunciation of all other deities, and all other religions, what could a heathen convert conceive of the two *creatures* so distinguished from all other creatures in heaven and in earth, and so associated with God himself as to form together the *one name*, to which, by that act, he was devoted, and which he was henceforward to profess and honour, but that they were equally Divine, unless special care were taken to instruct him that but one of the three was God, and the two others but creatures? But of this care, of this cautionary instruction, though so obviously necessary upon this theory, no single instance can be given in all the writings of the apostles.

Baptism was not a new rite. It was used as a religious act among heathens, and especially before initiation into their mysteries. Proselytes to the law of Moses were, probably, received by baptism; whether in, or into, the name of the God of Israel does not appear; (6) but necessarily on professing their faith in him as the true and only God. John, the forerunner of our Lord, baptized, but it does not appear that he baptized *in the name* or *into the name* of any one. This baptism was to all but our Lord, who needed it not, a baptism "unto repentance," that is, on profession of repentance, to be followed by "fruits meet for repentance," and into the expectation of the speedy approach of Messiah. But Christian baptism was directed to be in the NAME of three persons, which peculiarly implies, first, the *form* of words to be used by the administration; second, the *authority* conveyed to receive such persons as had been made disciples into the Church, and, consequently, into covenant with God; third, the *faith* required of the person baptized, faith in the existence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in their character according to the revelation made of each, first, by inspired teachers, and in after times by their writings; and, fourth, *consecration* to the service of the three persons, having *one name*, which could be no other than that of the one GOD. What stronger proof of the Divinity of each can be given than in this single passage? The *form* exhibits three persons, without any note of superiority or inferiority, except that of the mere *order* in which they are placed. It conveys *authority* in the united *name*, and the authority is, therefore, equal. It supposes *faith*, that is, not merely belief, but, as the object of religious profession and adherence, *trust* in each, or collectively in the one name which unites the three in one; yet that which is Divine only can be properly the object of religious truth. It implies *devotion* to the service of each, the yielding of *obedience*, the *consecration* of every power of mind and body to each, and therefore each must have an equal right to this surrender and to the authority which it implies.

It has been objected, that baptism is, in the book of Acts, frequently mentioned as baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" simply, and from hence the Socinians would infer that the formula in the Gospel of St. Matthew was not in use. If this were so, it would only conclude against the use of the words of our Lord as the standing form of baptism, but would prove nothing against the *significancy* of baptism in whatever form it might be administered. For as this passage in St. Matthew was the *original commission* under which, alone, the apostles had authority

(6) The baptism of Jewish proselytes is a disputed point. It was strenuously maintained by Dr. Lightfoot, and opposed by Dr. Benson. Wall has, however, made the practice highly probable, and it is spoken of in the Gospels as a rite with which the Jews were familiar. Certainly it was a practice among the Jews near the Christian era.

to baptize at all, the *import* of the rite is marked out in it, and, whatever words they used in baptism, they were found to explain the import of the rite, as laid down by their Master, to all disciples so received. But, from the passages adduced from the Acts, the inference that the form of baptism given in Matthew was not rigorously followed by the apostles does not follow, "because the earliest Christian writers inform us, that this solemn form of expression was uniformly employed from the beginning of the Christian Church. It is true, indeed, that the Apostle Peter said to those who were converted on the day of pentecost, Acts ii, 38, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ;' and that, in different places of the book of Acts it is said, that persons were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; but there is internal evidence from the New Testament itself, that when the historian says, that persons were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, he means they were baptized according to the form prescribed by Jesus. Thus the question put, Acts xix, 3, 'Unto what then were ye baptized?' shows that he did not suppose it possible for any person who administered Christian baptism to omit the mention of 'the Holy Ghost;' and even after the question, the historian, when he informs us that the disciples were baptized, is not solicitous to repeat the whole form, but says in his usual manner, Acts xix, 5, 'when they heard this, they were baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus.' There is another question put by the Apostle Paul, which shows us in what light he viewed the form of baptism: 1 Cor. i, 13, 'Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?' Here the question implies that he considered the form of baptism as so sacred, that the introducing the name of a teacher into it was the same thing as introducing a new master into the kingdom of Christ."

Ecclesiastical antiquity comes in, also, to establish the exact use of this form in baptism, as the practice from the days of the apostles. The most ancient method was for the persons to be baptized to say, "I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." This was his profession of faith, and with respect to the administration, Justin Martyr, who was born soon after the death of the Apostle John, says, in his first Apology, "Whosoever can be *persuaded* and *believe* that those things which are taught and asserted by us are true—are brought by us to a place where there is water, and regenerated according to the rite of regeneration, by which we ourselves have been born again. For then they are washed in the water, in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost." This passage, I may observe by the way, shows that, in the primitive Church, men were not baptized in order to their being taught, but taught in order to their being baptized, and that, consequently, baptism was not a mere expression of willingness to be instructed, but a profession of faith, and a *consecration* to the trinity, after the course of instruction was com-

pleted. Tertullian also says, "the law of baptism is enjoined and the form prescribed, Go teach the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." (*De Baptismo.*)

The testimonies to this effect are abundant, (7) and, together with the form given by our Lord, they prove that every Christian in the first ages did, upon his very entrance into the Church of Christ, profess his faith in the Divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father and the Son.

But other arguments are not wanting to prove both the personality and the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. With respect to the former,

1. The mode of his subsistence in the sacred trinity proves his personality. He *proceeds* from the Father and the Son, and cannot, therefore, be either. To say that an attribute proceeds and comes forth would be a gross absurdity.

2. From so many Scriptures being wholly unintelligible and even absurd, unless the Holy Ghost is allowed to be a person. For as those who take the phrase as ascribing no more than a figurative personality to an attribute, make that attribute to be the *energy* or *power* of God, they reduce such passages as the following to utter unmeaningness "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with *power*," that is, with the power of God and with power. "That ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost," that is, through the power of power. "In demonstration of the Spirit and of power," that is, in demonstration of power and of power. And if it should be pleaded that the last passage is a Hebraism for "powerful demonstration of the Spirit," it makes the interpretation still more obviously absurd, for it would then be "the powerful demonstration of power." "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost," to the power of God, "and to us." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come,"—the power of God and the bride say, Come. Modern Unitarians, from Dr. Priestley to Mr. Belsham, venture to find fault with the style of the apostles in some instances; and those penmen of the Holy Spirit have, indeed, a very unfortunate method of expressing themselves for those who would make them the patrons of Socinianism; but they would more justly deserve the censures of these judges of the "words which the Holy Ghost" taught, had they been really such writers as the Socinian scheme would make them, and of which the above are instances.

3. Personification of any kind is, in some passages in which the Holy Ghost is spoken of, impossible. The reality which this figure of speech is said to present to us is either some of the attributes of God, or else the doctrine of the Gospel. Let this theory, then, be tried upon the following passages:—"He shall not speak of *himself*, but whatsoever

(7) See Wall's History of Infant Baptism and Bingham's Antiquities

he shall *hear*, that shall he speak." What attribute of God can here be personified? And if the doctrine of the Gospel be arrayed with personal attributes, where is there an instance of so monstrous a prosopopœia as this passage would present?—the doctrine of the Gospel not speaking "of himself" but speaking "whatsoever he shall hear!"—"The Spirit maketh intercession for us." What attribute is capable of interceding, or how can the doctrine of the Gospel intercede? Personification, too, is the language of poetry, and takes place naturally only in excited and elevated discourse; but if the Holy Spirit be a personification, we find it in the ordinary and cool strain of mere narration and argumentative discourse in the New Testament, and in the most incidental conversations. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." How impossible is it here to extort, by any process whatever, even the shadow of a personification of either any attribute of God, or of the doctrine of the Gospel. So again, "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." Could it be any attribute of God which said this, or could it be the doctrine of the Gospel?

It is in vain, then, to speak of the personification of wisdom in the book of Proverbs, and of charity in the writings of St. Paul; and if even instances of the personification of Divine attributes and of the doctrine of the Gospel could be found under this very term, the Holy Spirit, yet the above texts and numerous other passages being utterly incapable of being so resolved, would still teach the doctrine of a personal Holy Ghost. The passage on which such interpreters chiefly rely as an instance of the personification of the doctrine of the Gospel is 2 Cor. iii, 6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." To this Witsius well replies:—

"Were we to grant that the Spirit, by a metonymy, denotes the doctrine of the Gospel; what is improperly ascribed there to the Gospel as an *exemplary* cause, is properly to be attributed to the person of the Holy Spirit, as the principal *efficient* cause. Thus also that which is elsewhere ascribed to the letter of the law is, by the same analogy, to be attributed to the person of the lawgiver. But it does not seem necessary for us to make such a concession. The apostle does not call the law 'the letter;' or the Gospel 'the Spirit;' but teaches that the letter is in the law, and the Spirit in the Gospel, so that they who minister to the law, minister to the letter; they who minister to the Gospel, to the Spirit. He calls that the letter, which is unable at first, and by itself, to convert a man; or to give a sinner the hope of life, much less to quicken him. By the Spirit, he understands both the person of th Spirit, and his quickening grace; which is clearly disclosed, and rendered efficacious, by means of the Gospel. In a preceding verse the

apostle undoubtedly distinguishes the Spirit from the doctrine, when he calls the Corinthians 'the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.'" (*Exposition of Creed.*)

Finally, that the Holy Ghost is a person, and not an attribute, is proved by the use of masculine pronouns and relatives in the Greek of the New Testament, in connection with the neuter noun πνευμα, *Spirit*; and by so many distinct personal acts being ascribed to him, as, *to come, to go, to be sent, to teach, to guide, to comfort, to make intercession, to bear witness, to give gifts, "dividing them to every man as he* WILL," *to be vexed, grieved,* and *quenched.* These cannot be applied to the mere fiction of a person, and they, therefore, establish the Spirit's true personality.

Some additional arguments, to those before given to establish the DIVINITY of the Holy Ghost may also be adduced.

The first is taken from his being the subject of blasphemy—"the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," Matt. xii, 31. This blasphemy consisted in ascribing his miraculous works to Satan; and that he is capable of being blasphemed proves him to be as much a *person* as the Son; and it proves him to be *Divine*, because it shows that he may be sinned against, and so sinned against, that the blasphemer shall not be forgiven. A person he must be, or he could not be blasphemed; a Divine person he must be to constitute this blasphemy a sin against him in the proper sense, and of so malignant a kind as to place it beyond the reach of mercy.

He is called GOD. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men; but unto God." Ananias is said to have lied, particularly "unto the Holy Ghost," because the apostles were under his special direction, in establishing the temporary regulation among Christians that they should have all things in common; the detection of the crime itself was a demonstration of the Divinity of the Spirit, because it showed his omniscience, his knowledge of the most secret acts. In addition to the proof of his Divinity thus afforded by this history, he is also called God, "Thou hast not lied unto men; but unto GOD." He is also called the LORD, "Now the Lord is that Spirit," 2 Cor. iii, 17. He is ETERNAL, "the eternal Spirit," Heb. ix, 14. OMNIPRESENCE is ascribed to him, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost;" "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Now, as all true Christians are his temples, and are led by him, he must be present to them at all times and in *all places.* He is said to be OMNISCIENT, "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of GOD." Here the Spirit is said to search or know "all things" absolutely; and then, to make this more emphatic, that he knows "the deep things of God." things hidden from every creature, the depths of

his essence, and the secrets of his counsels; for, that this is intended, appears from the next verse, where he is said to know "the things of God," as the spirit of a man knows the things of a man. SUPREME MAJESTY is also attributed to him, so that "to lie to him," to "blaspheme" him, "to vex" him, to do him "despite," are *sins*, and render the offender liable to Divine punishment.

He is the source of INSPIRATION. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "He shall lead you into all truth." He is the source and fountain of LIFE. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." As we have seen him acting in the material creation, so he is the author of the NEW CREATION, which is as evidently a work of *Divine* power as the former: "Born of the Spirit;" "The renewing of the Holy Ghost." He is the author of religious COMFORT—"The Comforter." The moral attributes of God are also given to him. HOLINESS, which includes all in one:—the HOLY Ghost is his eminent designation. GOODNESS and GRACE are his attributes. "Thy Spirit is good." "The Spirit of grace." TRUTH also, for he is "the Spirit of truth."

How impracticable it is to interpret the phrase, "The Holy Ghost," as a periphrasis for God himself, has been proved in considering some of the above passages, and will be obvious from the slightest consideration of the texts. A Spirit, which is the Spirit OF GOD; which is so often distinguished FROM the Father: which "SEES" and "HEARS" "the Father;" which SEARCHES "the deep things" of God; which is "SENT" by the Father; which "PROCEEDETH" from him; and who has special PRAYER addressed to him at the same time as the Father, cannot, though "one with him," be the Father; and that he is not the Son, is acknowledged on both sides.

As a DIVINE PERSON, our regards are, therefore, justly due to him as the object of worship and trust, of prayer and blessing; duties to which we are specially called, both by the general consideration of his Divinity, and by that affectingly benevolent and attractive character under which he is presented to us in the whole Scriptures. In creation we see him moving upon the face of chaos, and reducing it to a beautiful order; in providence, "renewing the face of the earth," "garnishing the heavens," and "giving life" to man. In grace we behold him expanding the prophetic scene to the vision of the seers of the Old Testament, and making a perfect revelation of the doctrine of Christ to the apostles of the New. He "reproves the world of sin," and works secret conviction of its evil and danger in the heart. He is "the Spirit of grace and supplication;" the softened heart, the yielding will, all heavenly desires and tendencies are from him. He hastens to the troubled spirits of penitent men, who are led by his influence to Christ,

and in whose hearts he has wrought *faith*, with the news of pardon, and "bears witness" of their sonship "with their spirit." He aids their "infirmities;" makes "intercession for them;" inspires thoughts of consolation and feelings of peace; plants and perfects in them whatsoever things are pure, and lovely, and honest, and of good report; delights in his own work in the renewed heart; dwells in the soul as in a temple; and, after having rendered the spirit to God, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, sanctified and meet for heaven, finishes his benevolent and glorious work by raising the bodies of saints in immortal life at the last day. So powerfully does "the Spirit of glory and of God" claim our love, our praise, and our obedience! In the forms of the Churches of Christ, in all ages, he has, therefore, been associated with the Father and the Son, in equal glory and blessing; and where such forms are not in use, this distinct recognition of the Spirit, so much in danger of being neglected, ought, by ministers, to be most carefully and constantly made, in every gratulatory act of devotion. that so equally to each person of the eternal trinity glory may be given "in the Church throughout all ages. Amen."

The essential and fundamental character of the doctrine of the holy and undivided trinity has been already stated, and the more fully the evidences of the Divinity of the Son and the Spirit are educed from the sacred writings, the more deeply we shall be impressed with this view, and the more binding will be our obligation to "contend earnestly for" this part of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Nor can the plea here be ever soundly urged, that this is a merely speculative doctrine; for, as it has been well observed by a learned writer, "The truth is, the doctrine of the trinity is so far from being merely a matter of speculation, that it is the very essence of the Christian religion, the foundation of the whole revelation, and connected with every part of it. All that is peculiar in this religion has relation to the redemption of Christ, and the sanctification of the Spirit. And whoso ever is endeavouring to invalidate these articles is overthrowing or undermining the authority of this dispensation, and reducing it to a good moral system only, or treatise of ethics.

"If the Word, or *Logos*, who became incarnate, was a created being only, then the mystery of his incarnation, so much insisted on in Scripture, and the love expressed to mankind thereby, so much magnified, dwindle into an interested service; and a short life of sufferings, concluded, indeed, with a painful death, is rewarded with Divine honours, and a creature advanced thereby to the glory of the Creator; for the command is plain and express, that 'all the angels of God' should 'worship him.' And have not many saints and martyrs undergone the same sufferings without the like glorious recompense? And is not the advantage to Christ himself, by his incarnation and passion, greater on this

supposition, than to men, for whose sake the sacred writers represent this scheme of mercy undertaken?

"Again: if the motions of the Holy Spirit, so frequently spoken of, are only figurative expressions, and do not necessarily imply any real person who is the author of them, or if this person be only a created being, then we are deprived of all hopes of *Divine* assistance in our spiritual warfare; and have nothing but our own natural abilities wherewith to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil. And is it not amazing that this article could ever be represented as a mere abstracted speculation, when our deliverance both from the *penalty* and power of sin does so plainly depend upon it? In the sacred writings a *true faith* is made as necessary as a *right practice*, and this in particular in order to that end. For *Arianism*, *Socinianism*, and all those several heresies, of what kind or title soever, which destroy the Divinity of the Son and Holy Ghost, are, indeed, no other than different schemes of infidelity; since the authority, end, and influence of the Gospel are as effectually made void by disowning the characters in which our Redeemer and Sanctifier are there represented, as even by contesting the evidences of its Divine original. These notions plainly rob those two Divine persons of their operations and attributes, and of the honour due to them; lessen the mercy and mystery of the scheme of our salvation; degrade our notion of ourselves and our fellow creatures; alter the nature of *several duties*, and weaken those great motives to the observance of *all* that true Christianity proposes to us." (*Dodwell.*)